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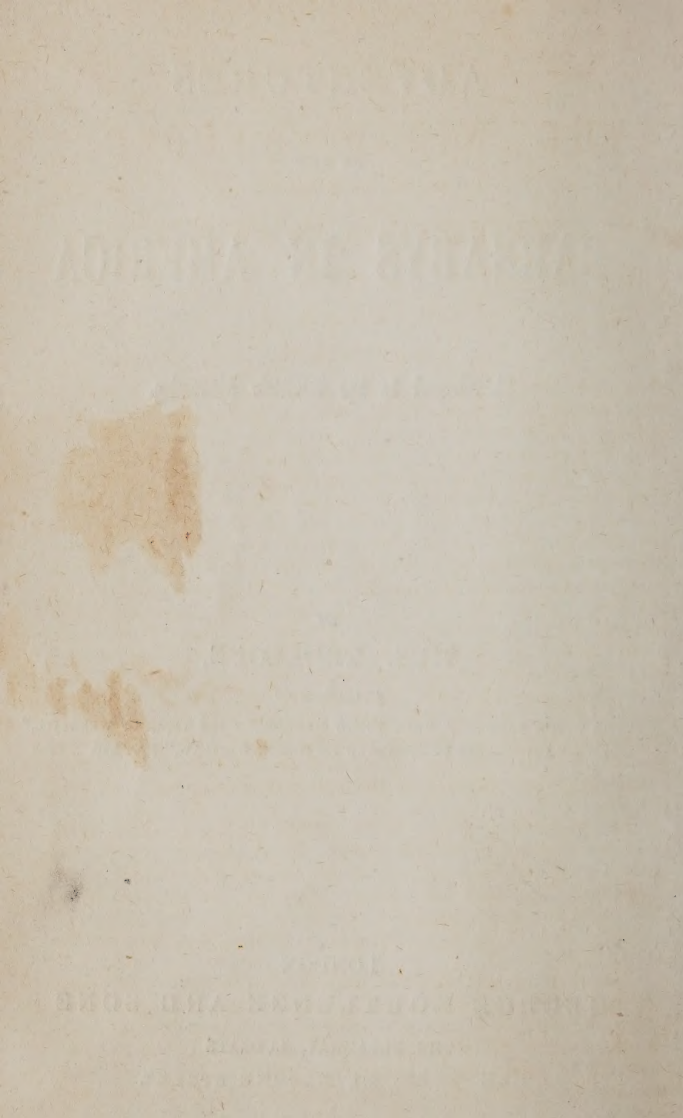
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BY
MRS. TROLLOPE,

AUTHORESS OF

"THE WIDOW BARNABY," "THE WIDOW MARRIED," "THE VICAR OF WREXHILL,"
"ADVENTURES OF JONATHAN JEFFERSON WHITLAW," ETC. ETC.

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THE WIDOW WEDDED;

OR, THE ADVENTURES OF

THE BARNABYS IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE affections of the human heart are various ; all equally genuine when nature is untampered with, but infinitely modified as to their intensity. The love of a parent for its offspring has been acknowledged on all hands to be one of the strongest and least uncertain of these affections, partaking so largely of instinct, as fairly to class it among the immutable laws of nature, and though certainly shared by the beasts which perish, yet felt to be venerable from the divinity of the origin whence the common well-spring rises. There is a modification, however, of this parental love, which is wholly free from, and undegraded by, any community either with the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, the reptiles which crawl upon the earth, or the birds which fly towards the heavens—there is a parental love, so purely spiritual, so wholly intellectual, as to place it in sublimity far above any other affection of the human heart.

“What may this be?” demand the uninitiated. Unhappy ones! Like a childless wife, and a husband without an heir, ye are unconscious of the fondest yearning that ever swelled a human breast! But is there an author who does not at once secretly acknowledge his sympathy in the feeling thus described! Oh no! not one.

Yet, elevated as is the nature of this intellectual love, there be many who are shy to confess it. Many, strange to say, who affect a total indifference, nay, almost oblivion, concerning those offsprings of the brain, for whom by every law, human and divine, they ought to feel the tenderest partiality. “Let no such men be trusted;” it is doing them injustice to believe that they can be sincere.

Far otherwise is it with the progenitor of the widow Barnaby. I scruple not to confess that with all her faults, and she has *some*, I love her dearly: I owe her many mirthful moments, and the deeper pleasure still of believing that she has brought mirthful moments to others also. Honestly avowing this to be the case, can any one wonder, can any one blame me, for feeling an affec-

tionate longing at my heart to follow her upon the expedition upon which I sent her when last we parted? An expedition, too, that was to lead her to a land which all the world knows I cherish in my memory with peculiar delight? I will not believe it, but trusting to the long-established and good-humoured toleration of those who descend to listen to my gossipings, I will forthwith proceed to tell them all that has happened to this dear excellent lady since General Hubert and Mr. Stephenson left her in her grand drawing-room in Curzon-street, surrounded by her family and friends.

CHAPTER II.

"I HAVE enjoyed that, Patty, and I won't deny it," cried the *ci-devant* widow Barnaby, as the above-named gentlemen quitted her drawing-room. "Heaven knows I am not a spiteful person, and I can forgive and forget as soon as anybody, but it was absolutely beyond nature not to enjoy letting those two puffed-up-top-sawyer fellows see that you had contrived to get married, my dear, while the whey-faced Miss Elizabeth was still a poor, pale, thin ghost of a spinster, as I may say—for so she is, dearest, compared to you."

"Oh, lor! don't talk of her, mamma! The very thought of her makes me sick—if it don't I'll be hanged," replied Madame Espartero Christinino Tornorino, giving a little shudder, and creeping still closer to her loving husband, till her handsome face was half hid in his bosom. "Oh, my goodness! For how much, I wonder, would I change places with her?"

"Not for a trifle, I have a notion, my dear," said her mother, laughing heartily; "but I'd give just sixpence to see how my conceited niece Agnes looks, when she hears you are married. I'd make an even bet that she won't believe it. What will you lay me that she does not take it for a joke of that gay chap, Frederic Stephenson?"

"No, no, she would if she could, I don't doubt that, mamma, in the least," replied the bride; "but it is not so easy to do as to wish. I suppose she will have some wedding-cake sent her, won't she?"

"I'll take care of that, my dear," said Miss Louisa Perkins, nodding her head with a look of great intelligence. "Your dear mamma has given me a little hint about that business already, and of course your own noble relations will come first."

"Oh, yes! my darling creature!" exclaimed Miss Matilda, with a stifled sigh, "we will all take care of that, depend upon it; and do—oh, do—my dearest, dearest Patty! let me have the tying up your name-cards together! It will be such a delight. If dear Mrs

O'Donagough will just give me a shilling or two for it, I'll go out and buy the silver twist for them this very moment. Oh!" with another sigh, "it will be such a sweet office!"

"By-the-by, that is well thought of, Matilda," observed the fond and provident mother. "Mercy on me, Patty, now one comes to think of it, what a whirl you have put us all in, with this frolic of yours—silver twist is the least of it, Matilda! There must be favours, just as if we had been all regularly at church together, you know. I am not going to let the wedding of my only daughter with a first-rate Spanish nobleman pass over as if we were just common ordinary people, who had never been to court, or distinguished in any way."

"Of course you won't!" exclaimed both the Miss Perkinses in a breath, and Miss Matilda, confident in intimacy, added, "I am sure you would be a fool if you did."

"And then there is the sending it to the papers you know, mamma," said Madame E. C. Tornorino, with energy; "I do beg that may not be forgotten."

"Mercy on me," cried her mother, "to think that I should keep sitting here with such an awful deal of business to do! It is all very natural that you two should like to keep together, there, billing and cooing like a pair of wood-pigeons, but it will never do for us. My dear Don Tornorino, will you just step down into your father-in-law's library, and look for a pen and ink, and a sheet of paper, and then I will give you leave to whisper to Patty till dinner-time, if you like it."

The tall bridegroom rose from his place to obey her, and using a little gentle violence to disengage his coat-collar from the fond grasp of his affectionate bride, very respectfully pronounced the words "Yes, ma'am," and left the room.

"Isn't he beautiful, mamma?" demanded the young wife, as soon as he had disappeared. "He is ten thousand million times handsomer than Jack ever was or ever will be, isn't he?"

"He is a very fine man, Patty, there is no doubt of it," replied Mrs. O'Donagough. "I always admired that style of man—the whiskers and hair, and all that, you know. I have always thought that it gave particularly the air of a gentleman—I might, indeed, say of a nobleman."

"Exactly that!" cried Miss Matilda Perkins. "Mrs. O'Donagough always expresses herself so happily. He is a *fine* man—a stylish man, Patty. That is exactly what he is—and many and many's the girl that will look upon you with envy, my dear, take my word for that."

"Well, I can't help it, if they do, Matilda," replied the well-pleased Madame Tornorino. "But I wish you would not send him away, mamma! Why could not Matilda, or your own particular friend, Louisa, have gone for the pen and ink? I do think it is very hard to send one's husband away the very first day after one is married to him."

"But who could guess, Patty, that he would be staying so unaccountably long?" returned her mother.

"Lor bless my soul, I could have made the paper by this time, and I shall have altogether forgot what came into my head about what was to be sent to the newspaper—haven't you got a scrap of paper either of you, and a pencil?"

The ready hand of the faithful Louisa was in her pocket in an instant, and from its varied stores she drew forth the "Lady's Polite Remembrancer" for the year, which contained a little pencil, very neatly cut for writing.

"Will this do, dear Mrs. O'Donagough?" said she, presenting it.

"Do? Lor no! I shall break it in half a minute. But, however, that don't much signify, I may just write down a word or two, to keep what I was thinking of in my head, it was so exactly the right sort of thing. Give me some paper, Louisa?"

"Paper? Oh, dear me, where can I find any, I wonder? Do, my dear darling Miss Patty, tell me where I can find a bit of paper for good mamma?"

On being thus addressed, the newly-married lady suddenly sprung from the sofa on which she had been seated, and rushing across the room with a movement more resembling the spring of a powerful young panther than anything else, seized the gentle Louisa by the shoulders, and shook her heartily.

"I'll teach you to call me Miss Patty, you nasty old maid, you! How dare you do any such thing? Don't you know that if I am Miss Patty still, I am just no better than I ought to be, and a pretty thing that is for you to say of your own best friend's only daughter. Arn't you ashamed of yourself—arn't you then?"

"I am, indeed, my dearest Mrs. Torni—oh, dear me! How shall I speak what I don't no more understand than if it was just so much Greek? You must please, indeed you must, just to write down for me your name, exactly as you wish to have it spoken, and you shall see that I will never do the same thing again—no, never as long as I live."

"Well, then, don't bother any more about it now, but just get mamma some paper."

By dint of hunting in various drawers, a sheet of paper was at length found, upon which Mrs. O'Donagough, notwithstanding the fragility of her pencil, contrived to scrawl the following paragraph:

"By special license—Martha, the only daughter and sole heiress of John William O'Donagough, Esq., to Don Espartero Christinino Tornorino. We are happy to learn from the most unquestionable authority that, though a foreigner, this distinguished nobleman is in every respect worthy of the enviable preference which has been given him by the most admired beauty of the present season. The sensation produced by the appearance of this young lady at the last drawing-room, will probably cause her immediate marriage to be a source of disappointment to many."

Having, after a good many revisals, completed her composition, Mrs. O'Donagough read it aloud, with all the dignity it deserved, and then said—

“What do you think of that, ladies?”

“Why it is first-rate beautiful, mamma,” replied Patty, rubbing her hands; “only, you know, it is a downright lie as ever was told, for me and my darling were married by banns, we took care about that. As to all the rest, it is true enough for all I know to the contrary.”

“Well, dear, and what does that little scratch of the pen signify, whether it's true or not,” demanded her mother; “nobody will know anything about it, and it sounds better, doesn't it?”

“Well, there—let it stand, mamma. It is not worth disputing about, certainly. Married is married all the world over. And what you say about *him* is all right and correct. But where is he, darling beauty! I tell you what, Mrs. O'Donagough, it won't do for you to be sending my husband about right and left—mind that, if you please. And now you see papa's keeping him, whether he will or no. I won't bear it any longer, that's what I won't, so good-by to you all.” And so saying, Madame Tornorino darted out of the room.

“Oh heavens! How that charming creature's affection touches me!” exclaimed Miss Matilda Perkins. “How animated, how beautiful is her conjugal tenderness! Ah, who can witness it, and not look with envy upon happiness so pure and so exalted,” she added, almost inaudibly.

Patty meanwhile made her way rapidly by a sort of sliding movement of her hand, down the banisters, rather than by the use of her feet (a mode of descending the stairs to which she was greatly addicted when in good spirits), to the door of the room dignified by the appellation of “the library,” and throwing it open without ceremony, found herself, considerably to her surprise, in the presence of two persons who were, beyond all question, wrangling violently; and unhappily for her new-born felicity, poor little lady! these persons were her father and her husband.

“How dare you look so savagely cross at my darling Tornorino, papa?” she exclaimed, with great indignation, and at the same time throwing her arms round her husband, who, as well as her father, was standing. “How dare you, I say? Don't knit your brows at me, papa, for you know as well as I do, that I don't care the hundredth part of a farthing for your frowns—and that I didn't either before I was a married woman; so I leave you to guess how much I care for them now. But I won't have my dear darling plagued, that I won't—so mind what you are about, old gentleman.”

“This is no time for playing the fool, Patty,” replied her father, in a voice which, despite all the courage of her native spirit, strengthened as it now was by her matronly position, made her quail. “Did I serve you right, hussy, I should push you out of

doors this instant, with the beggarly fellow you have thought proper to choose for a husband."

"Why do you let him talk so, Don Tornorino?" exclaimed poor Patty, bursting into tears. "You know it's all lies! Why do you let him go on so?"

"Hold your tongue, girl, and hear me!" resumed her father, in a tone that neither the bride nor bridegroom could listen to unmoved. "I have been asking this fine whiskered hero of yours a few questions, and from his agreeable answers, it appears perfectly evident that the coat upon his back constitutes by far the most valuable part of his possessions. This being the case, my young madam, I will beg you to inform me how and where you intend to live?"

"I don't believe a word of it, I don't," sobbed Patty, trembling both with rage and fear. "He is a Don, he told me so himself; I know he is a Don—arn't you a Don, my dear, arn't you?"

"Never mind. You no talk, Miss Patty, say anything à propos de moi. Listen, dutiful, à votre bon papa," replied her husband, disengaging himself from her arms, and placing himself behind a chair, in order, as it should seem, to keep out of her way.

"Do you call me Miss Patty, you traitor of a man?" screamed the unfortunate wife. "If my papa is the dear good papa he used to be, he'll teach you to call your own lawful wife by such a name as that—won't you, dear pa?—won't you make him treat me like a married woman?"

If the high-minded Mr. O'Donagough did love anything in the world besides himself, it certainly was his daughter; and even at the present moment, though harassed by a pretty considerable variety of disagreeable thoughts, he could not see the showers of tears which fell from her bright eyes, without enough of pity and tenderness to moderate the angry feelings with which he had just addressed her, and to produce a tone of much greater gentleness as he said—

"I am sorry for you, my poor Patty, with all my heart and soul. But it will do no good to mince the matter, you have married yourself to a fellow without a sixpence, and there are some fathers who would make little difficulty of easing themselves at once of all trouble concerning you, by turning you both into the street together. But I have not the heart to do it, Patty—though, God knows, at this time the fewer burdens I have the better. However, your mother's income is settled upon her, and in case of the worst, may be worth keeping. And so, all things considered, I am determined to treat you better than you deserve, and take you along with me. I have explained myself pretty fully to your husband, and he has wit enough, whatever other qualities he may want, to understand how I shall expect he will behave himself. So no more sobbing and crying, Patty. We must one and all make the best of a very bad matter. Things might be worse—I don't mean as to your marriage, for I don't see exactly how that could

be; but I *might* have been found considerably worse prepared for the accident that has happened to me."

"What *do* you mean, papa?" demanded the astonished Patty, her eyes opened greatly beyond their usual ample dimensions, her curls hastily pushed back, and her head extended forwards to the utmost extent of her handsome throat. "What, in heaven's name, are you talking about? If my Tornorino is not really a Don, he is a monstrous liar, and that he knows as well as I. But I am ready to forget and forgive, because he is such a darling, and because it is as clear as light that he only said it for the sake of being the more sure of getting me; and if you'll forgive and forget it too, papa, it will be very good-natured of you. But what in the world has that to do with my 'going along with you.' Going along where, I should like to know? I don't mean to go along anywhere, and that's flat. I mean to stay here, and show off my wedding-ring and my wedding-clothes, and my handsome husband, to my aunt Herbert, and my cousins, and that nasty brute of a beast, Jack that was, and everybody else that I ever saw or knew in all my life before. So please not to say any more about 'going along;' for all the *along* I shall be going, will just be driving along the streets in mamma's beautiful carriage to buy wedding-clothes."

The spirit of Mr. John William Patrick Allen O'Donagough seldom failed him; and, to do him justice, it must be avowed that he rarely permitted any emotion to be visible on his countenance, which it was his wish to hide. But as he listened to this speech from the animated Patty, he looked a less great, a less philosophical man than usual. For a moment he turned away his head to avoid her gaze, and his complexion varied. But this lasted not long; a very short interval sufficed to restore him to his wonted happy hardihood; and then he composedly turned to his son-in-law, saying, with very perfect self-possession—

"Get up stairs, Tornorino; I want to speak to my daughter alone."

The Don, who did not appear to show in any large degree the firmness of nerve possessed by his distinguished father-in-law, delayed not for the hundredth part of a second to obey him, but instantly slipped out of the room, despite the extended hand of his wife, which seemed stretched out as if to "clutch him," and impede his departure.

"Sit down, Patty," said Mr. O'Donagough.

The puzzled Patty obeyed, her eyes still steadily fixed upon her mysterious parent.

"I am sorry to tell you, Patty, that your silly marriage is not the only, nor perhaps the worst, misfortune that has fallen upon us within the last twenty-four hours," said he.

"I wish you would not go on talking of my marriage in that way, papa," said the bride, recovering her courage as her father's manner towards her softened. "I'm the best judge, I suppose, whether my husband is the man I love; and I tell you, once for all,

that he is. And if it turns out that he is not particularly rich because of his leaving most of his money behind in his own country, what can that signify, I should like to know, when, as mamma says, I am your only sole heiress; and you, as rich as you are, with your fine house and carriage, and going to court, and the lord knows what besides?"

Mr. O'Donagough knit his brows, but presently relaxed the frown, and sighed deeply.

"That is just the point, my poor dear child, upon which I want to speak to you. I have a very singular history to disclose, Patty, which will explain, only too well, all that now appears mysterious to you," said he.

Having thus spoken, he paused for a moment, and fixed his eyes full upon her face with great solemnity; but just as he seemed about to resume his discourse, Patty stopped him by saying—

"Pray, papa, will everybody go on calling me *Patty*, as you do? I can't say I like it at all; it's a monstrous disappointment to me; why shouldn't I be called by my husband's name, with *Mrs.* before it, like other married women? I do think it is very hard."

"I will call you *Mrs. Tornorino*, my dear, if you wish it," replied her father, with a smile which certainly, notwithstanding his constitutional strength of mind, gave him a good deal the air of 'a very foolish, fond old man;' "but you know, darling, that when parents have got a beautiful young married daughter, like you, they always continue to call them by their Christian name—that is, as long as they continue young and beautiful."

"Do they? Oh! I did not know that. Well, then, papa, you may go on so, if you please. But I hope nobody else will, for *Tornorino* is certainly the very prettiest name I ever heard in my life. Don't you think it is, papa?"

"My dear, dear *Patty*! I dare say I shall think any name that belongs to you pretty. But I have a great deal of business, *Patty*, that must be done directly, and I do beg you will listen to what I am going to say. Do now, there's a good girl!"

"Now I am sure you say that only to torment me, papa, and for no other reason in the whole world!" exclaimed *Patty*, with great vehemence. "You will never make me believe that let a married woman be as young as she will, she ought to be called *GIRL*! It is a downright insult; and if *Tornorino* has as much spirit as a rat, he won't bear it, that he won't!"

Mr. O'Donagough's fondness began to give way to anger, and it was decidedly more a ban than a blessing which burst from his lips, as he started out of his chair, and striding towards his daughter placed his hands upon her shoulder, shaking her with more energy than gentleness.

"By the heaven above us, *Patty*, I am afraid you are a greater fool than I took you for! If you were six, instead of sixteen, you might listen to me when I tell you that I want to speak on matters of the greatest possible importance. But if you really are too silly

to care for anything but your own nonsense, I shall leave you to your fate, and that may very likely lead to the turning you and your fine mustache into the street before you are many hours older."

These words were uttered with very considerable vehemence, and before Patty could sufficiently recover her wits to answer them, her angry father had passed through the door, and banged it together after him.

CHAPTER III.

NOTWITHSTANDING the dauntless style in which the spirited young bride had received her father's rebuke upon the penniless nature of the connection she had formed, she was not altogether unconscious that it was deserved, or indifferent to the dangers which might arise to herself and her "darling," were pa to get downright cross with her. It was therefore with no lingering movement that she scrambled across the room after him, threw open the door again, and sprung upon the back of his neck just as his foot reached the first stair, much after the fashion of a favourite young Newfoundland dog who has attained his full size, but not his full gravity and discretion. Most assuredly Mr. O'Donagough was in no playful mood, and perhaps his very first impulse upon receiving this powerful caress, was to have rejected it with equal vigour by a backward movement of the leg just raised in act to mount. But he felt that it was the hand of Patty that was at his throat, and his "one virtue" mastering him, he turned round with something between a smile and a frown, saying—

"Don't be a fool, Patty. What d'ye want?"

"Want? my own dear pap? want *you*, to be sure. How could you run away from your own poor dear Patty so? and she just married too! and all for nothing in the world but because she wanted to have a bit of fun with you! Come along back with me pa, and see if I don't listen to all you have got to say, as grave as a judge. You see if I don't."

O'Donagough, wholly overcome by this pretty *naïveté*, very lovingly threw his arm round her waist, and returned into the room they had left; but still his step and manner were so very solemn that Madame Tornorino began to be frightened outright, and when he had placed her in one chair, and himself in another, exactly opposite to her, she looked as sober and sedate as he could possibly have desired.

"It will be necessary, my dear child," he began, "in order to make you fully understand my present very embarrassing situation, that I should relate to you some circumstances of my early life, with which you are, and indeed your excellent mother also, as yet unacquainted. While still a very young man, my dear Pattyl and, to speak with the degree of frankness necessary to the full comprehension of my singular history, by no means ill-looking, in fact, I was exceedingly like yourself, Patty; at this period, my

dear, I unfortunately happened to be quartered with my regiment at Windsor. The Regent, subsequently our beloved monarch, George the Fourth, was holding his splendid court there. The *precise* time of which I speak need not be mentioned. Indeed, for many painfully important reasons, it will be greatly best that I should avoid doing so. And I will, therefore, beg of you, my dear, to ask me no questions. All that is essential you should know I will freely communicate to you. And for the rest——”

Here Mr. O'Donagough paused for a moment, and rested his forehead upon his extended hand, as if wishing to conceal some too powerful emotion with which his soul was struggling; but after one deep-drawn sigh, he proceeded—

“Amidst the brightest ornaments of that splendid court, my dear child, was a young lady possessed of a degree of beauty, which, even at this distance of time, I cannot recall without a violence of emotion that shakes every nerve, and teaches me that there are feelings that neither time nor circumstance can obliterate. But, alas! my Patty, the dignity of her birth and station equalled the beauty of her person. The proudest nobles of the land vied with each other for her favour. All the world loved *her*, but she, alas! alas! loved *me* alone! This too lovely, this too beloved lady, was in the habit of walking frequently upon the terrace of the castle. Her high rank insured her admittance at all times, and I, from my military command, found it only too easy to invent ostensible reasons for being there also. That terrace, that noble Windsor-terrace, Patty, is known to millions, and remembered fondly by all who have seen it, as one of the most enchanting spots on earth. But alas! where is the aching, throbbing, palpitating memory which recollects like mine? Where is there another heart which bounds, yet sinks, which trembles, yet exults at the mere sound of its name, as mine does? My child, it was upon that terrace that the mutual love of that noble lady and your too happy, yet too wretched father was mutually confessed and mutually returned. She loved me, Patty! *Loved* me, did I say? She worshipped—she adored me! And I—can you blame me, my dear child, if——” here Mr. O'Donagough was very strongly agitated; notwithstanding his evident struggles to master his feelings, he found himself obliged to draw forth his pocket-handkerchief, and apply it to his eyes—“can you, I say, blame me, Patty, if I loved too?”

“Good gracious, no, papa! Not the least bit in the world,” replied his daughter. “I am sure you would have been a most horrid monster of a man if you had not. But do go on, pa, and tell me what happened next? Did you run away with her, as my Don did with me?”

“Patty, I dare not tell you more of this eventful history.”

“Well I never!” exclaimed Patty, looking exceedingly disappointed; “no never in all my life heard anything like that. Just as if telling could signify now, when it must have been such ages and ages ago. Don't be foolish, papa, there's a dear good man, but

go on, and, for goodness' sake, tell me all that happened between you and this grand lady. Well to be sure, it's no great wonder that you hold your head so high as you do sometimes, I must say that for you, pap. But, pray, does mamma know all about it? Whether she does or not, however, don't signify a straw, for I am positively dying to hear the rest, and hear it I must. So go on, papa, when I bid you."

"For the rest, my dear, there is but little more that can or ought to be said," replied Mr. O'Donagough, with an air of discretion befitting the circumstances. "All that I can further relate concerns myself only. The vigilant eyes of those who surrounded the noble lady, who, by the way, it is necessary I should tell you was a countess in her own right, were not slow in discovering how matters stood, and the consequence to me may be easily guessed. Though well-born, and highly educated, and with a military reputation (for why should I deny it, Patty?) of the very highest class, I was still considered as immeasurably below the noble object of my love. Her proud and cruel friends would not for an instant endure the idea of a marriage between us, which would make her title descend to my offspring. I was ordered to go abroad immediately, and a multitude of injurious reports were industriously attached to my name, in the hope of estranging the heart of my beloved countess. I went, Patty, a broken-hearted wanderer; I quitted my native shores, and looked my last upon my noble love. But guess my agonies when I tell you, that almost the first news I received from England, brought me the account of her marriage with a nobleman of rank equal to her own! It is torture to remember it. But no more of this, Patty. I must not, I dare not dwell on all I have suffered. Years rolled on, and brought with them the healing balm that ever rests upon their wings. I saw your excellent mother. I saw, admired, wooed, and won her, Patty; and O! for her sake, as well as for other most important reasons, I would not wish this history to be greatly talked of. That you should converse respecting it with your mother, is of course perfectly natural. But do not dwell upon the passion I have described to you—it may pain her. By your own feelings for Don Tornorino, my dear love, you may guess what her's are for me. The high nobility of my first passion will not suffice to heal the mortification arising from knowing that she never could have been more than second in my heart. You will now, in your present situation, easily understand all this, and will have too much tenderness for her, I am sure, to wound her feelings unnecessarily. You understand me?"

"Yes, I suppose I understand you, papa," replied Patty, "but I can't help thinking that what you say is very nonsensical, because it is downright humbug, and nothing else, to talk of you and mamma being like Tornorino and me. However, I'll do just whatever you like about it. And though you are so old now, it is a beautiful love story as ever was wrote in a book, and I must and will tell my Don of it. You won't mind that I suppose?"

"No, my dear Patty, not at all," replied her father, affectionately. "On the contrary, my love, I wish him to be made acquainted with all the peculiarities of my situation. They *are* very peculiar; and now I must proceed to explain to you why it is, that now, for the first time, I consider it proper to open my heart to you on this painful subject. It is, believe me, a theme inexpressibly distressing to me, particularly at this moment, when I would willingly have devoted myself to making the early days of your married life, my poor child, pass gaily and joyously. But unhappily I am compelled to announce to you the very disagreeable fact that, unless your husband has a home of his own to take you to, your honeymoon, my pretty Patty, must be passed on board ship."

"Good gracious, why? I shan't like that at all, I promise you. I mean that mamma shall go out with me directly to buy some wedding clothes, and there will be no fun in being fine unless there is somebody to admire me. I do beg, papa, that wherever you are going, you won't set off till I have received all my visits, and returned them too. I am dying for my cousin Elizabeth to see my wedding-ring, and hear me call my tall, grand-looking husband, Tornorino. I am certain as that I am here, that she will be just ready to die with envy."

"Nothing can be more natural than your feelings, my dear Patty, and it grieves me to the heart that I cannot indulge you in them. But you have not heard my sad story yet, my dear. The persecution I have undergone has been terrible beyond belief. As long as the sweet angel lived I was obliged either to remain out of the country, or else return under a feigned name, and live in the most complete retirement, to avoid the possibility of her knowing that I was near her. Alas! Patty, a jealous husband is the most terrible of tyrants. God grant that this dreadful fate may never be yours."

"Oh! there is no danger at all of that, papa, for I love my handsome husband a great deal too well to let anybody else make love to me."

"That is a great blessing, my dear, a very great blessing. But to return to my sad story. One might have hoped, Patty, might one not, that when the lovely countess was no more, the tyrants might have ceased to persecute? The hope of this was, I assure you, the only thing which enabled me to retain my senses when I lost her. But no! even in this I have been deceived."

"For a short time, indeed, after my last return from abroad, on which return you and your excellent mother accompanied me, I was permitted to breathe the air of my native land unmolested; and it was dear to me because it was the air my Eleonora had breathed! But last night I received the astounding information that your appearance at court (where you were recognised as *my* daughter), had given rise to the most injurious suspicions. There are persons in certain circles, Patty, who have not scrupled to hint that the excellent woman, whom before heaven I declare to be your mother,

is no more to you than your nurse, and that your real mother was no other than the lamented heiress I have named to you! This, as you will immediately perceive, throws a doubt upon the succession to her title and estates which, if it takes wind, may plunge the whole of her noble family into the horrible exposure of a trial and a lawsuit. I have accordingly received official hints that unless by at once withdrawing myself I relieve the family from this alarm, measures will be immediately resorted to for the purpose of removing me from England for ever. I leave you to guess what my feelings were on receiving this intimation."

"Why, they don't mean to say that I ought to be the countess, do they, papa?" demanded Patty, with considerable vivacity.

"Not exactly that, my dear. No one, I believe, has hitherto ventured to assert as a fact, what, under the circumstances, it would be so exceedingly difficult to prove. Nobody, as yet, has gone that length. But be this as it may, of the necessity of our immediately leaving England there can be no question. Were I to delay a week, I have little doubt that I should find myself an object of the most tyrannical persecution—and that, probably, for life. I have, therefore, no time to lose, and I have taken this early opportunity of communicating these facts to you, in order that you might make up your mind either to accompany your mother and myself to the United States of America, or to go immediately with your husband to such home as he can provide for you. How do you decide, Patty?"

"I will tell you in a minute, papa, if you will only let me ask you one or two questions," she replied.

"Then make short work of your questions, Patty, for I have no time to lose," said Mr. O'Donagough, once again portentously knitting his brows.

"Don't look cross, papa, and I will have done in a minute. And please, in the first place, to tell me whether it is quite sure and certain that I never can be a countess in my own right?"

"I am sorry to say, my dear, that there is not the slightest chance of it," gravely replied Mr. O'Donagough.

"That's no go, then," responded Patty, with a slight sigh.

"Now then," she resumed, "my next question is, whether being so fond of me as you are, and I your only child, whether, I say, you could not give me, before you go, fortune enough for me and Don Tornorino to live on here a little, in good flashing style, just to plague the Huberts, and that nasty beast, Jack, before we go out after you and mamma to America?"

"Here, again, my dear child," said Mr. O'Donagough, with a truly paternal smile, "I recognise the most natural feelings, and believe me, I fully sympathise in them; but I lament to say that what you ask is altogether impossible. For the tyrants who pursue me with their jealous vengeance——"

"Do you mean the lady's husband, papa?" cried Patty, with a sudden burst of irrepressible curiosity.

"Pardon me, my dear, I cannot answer," replied her father with solemnity. "Nor is it in any way necessary that I should, in order to make you fully comprehend my position. Whoever they be who pursue me, their power over me is such that I cannot, without the most imminent risk to my liberty, and even to my life, attempt to realise any part of my property. Indeed, I have but too much reason to fear that by far the greater portion of the funds upon which I reckoned as the source from which your fortune should be drawn, and our own handsome manner of living supplied, will be rendered entirely unavailable by this last stroke of barbarous jealousy. All that can be done for our future comfort, depend upon it, my dear Patty, I will do; but if you and your husband, after properly taking into consideration the fact of my almost ruined fortunes, shall still decide upon accompanying us into exile, it must be with the understanding that you are uniting your fortunes to those of a poor man—compared to what I believed myself to be—a *very* poor man, and must conduct yourselves accordingly."

Patty looked exceedingly grave, and remained silent considerably longer than was her wont on any occasion; but her father wished to hear what *she* had got to say in reply to his communication, and waited patiently till she spoke. At length, after heaving rather a deep sigh, she said, with an expression somewhat indicative of alarm upon her countenance—

"I don't know what my Don will say to it, papa, because I always told him that you was so monstrous rich. Good gracious, what shall I do, if he should grow cross about it and leave off loving me? I do think, upon my honour, that it would drive me mad."

"In that case, my dear love," replied her father, composedly, "I should, of course, turn him out of doors immediately."

"What? my own dear, darling husband? and I left by myself without any husband at all? No, no, Mr. Pap, you'll do no such thing as that, I promise you. What you must do is this, dear papa, you must squeeze out every penny you can save from every other earthly thing, and give it all to my dear Don; and that, you know, will keep him in good humour, even if you don't happen to live out in America in such a grand house as this. That is what you really *will* do, my own dear darling pap, isn't it?"

And Patty sprung across the space which divided them, threw her arms round his neck, and began kissing him with more vehemence than she had ever done before, save once when she had conceived an ardent affection for a pink-satin dress, which his fiat alone could enable her to obtain.

Upon that occasion she had succeeded—the pink-satin dress had been the reward of her kisses, and it was, perhaps, the remembrance of this fact which made her now shower them so liberally. But her father seemed not in the kissing vein; for he disengaged himself, though gently, from her clinging embraces, and quietly replied—

"The best thing you can do, Patty, is to tell your husband the whole of the melancholy story which I have just told you; he will then understand how things are, and if, as I suspect, his own circumstances are such as still to make his sticking close to us the best thing he can do, I dare say he will have common sense enough to keep his ground without being very troublesome. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may find him useful, and in that case I have no doubt but we shall go on very comfortably."

Patty pretty well knew when there was anything to be gained from "Pa," and when there was not; the present use of which experience was to make her quietly walk off, saying, "that she would soon make her dear Don understand all about it."

CHAPTER IV.

To prepare his beautiful Patty for the change she was about to undergo, was perhaps not the least disagreeable of the various operations which Mr. John William Patrick Allen O'Donagough knew that he had to perform before he set out upon the expedition which (as doubtless all the world will remember) General Hubert had so strenuously recommended. It had taken the affectionate father some fifteen or twenty minutes to decide in what manner the news could be conveyed to the happy bride, his daughter, with the least annoyance to her sensitive feelings; but from the moment the matter presented itself to his imagination in the shape which has been shown forth in the last chapter, every unpleasant sensation vanished. Nay, the interview, which he had previously dreaded, became, in a considerable degree, agreeable to him.

It is, I believe, a notorious fact in natural history, that, whatever instinct or faculty nature has bestowed upon an animal with predominating strength, causes in its exercise the most decided gratification; and it would be difficult to bring in evidence a stronger confirmation of this interesting phenomenon, than the state of feeling produced on the mind of Mr. O'Donagough by the act of lying. His spirits seemed to rise, his faculties to expand themselves, his features assumed a look of animation and intelligence inconceivably beyond what they ever manifested at any other time; and if the observer's eye could have gone deeper and penetrated to his heart, it would have been found gaily bounding in his bosom, in a sort of triumphant jubilee at the bold feats of his undaunted tongue.

On the whole, therefore, the half-hour he had bestowed upon Patty had done him good, and it was with no faltering voice that he called to her as she quitted the room, bidding her to send her mother to him.

Mr. O'Donagough was, as we have said, a man of very considerable firmness of nerve, and had never, at any period of his

life, been found infirm of purpose. Within half an hour of leaving his "third drawing-room" on the preceding night, in the manner described in a former series of the records of this interesting family, he had pretty fully made up his mind as to what he should do with himself and his belongings. Though he felt that the earth was not wholly before him where to choose, he was aware that quite a sufficient quantity remained open for him to prevent any embarrassment on the score of elbow-room. Nor had he that very dispiriting misfortune to contend with, which arises from the want of those sinews so well known to be necessary in every operation which man carries on, either with or against man. His lady's provident wisdom had taken care, at the time of their marriage, that all that was hers should remain her own, and her little income was therefore as long as they remained together a sort of *pis aller* fund, which would always prevent their being in actual want. This was well, snug, comfortable, and soothing; but this was, by no means, the most agreeable financial feature in his case.

From the time that—to use his own phrase—he had sown those wild oats which had, in some way or other, occasioned his last excursion across the ocean to the present period, when it was likely that a second voyage would be the best remedy for the little *contre-temps* which had occurred in his "third drawing-room," he had never ceased adding to that small stock of private pocket-money, which he had begun to collect at his sociable whist-parties at Sydney. It is hardly fair, perhaps, to lift the veil of reserve by which he had ever kept the amount of this concealed, even from the wife of his bosom; but, as accident has made me acquainted with the amount thus collected, I am tempted to name it as a proof (useful may it prove to the unthrifty!) of what may be done by steady and persevering labour.

Mr. O'Donagough, then, at this time, stood possessed of a sum amounting to £12,899, of which his wife had no more knowledge than the man in the moon. And this, be it observed, was safely stowed and funded in the English stocks, so that it was exclusive of the contents of poor Mr. Ronaldson's purse and pocket-book, which, however, amounted to very nearly a thousand more, and which now made the pleasant-feeling lining of his own coat-pocket. Assuredly, if ever man deserved the honourable title of a *chevalier d'industrie*, it was Mr. John William Patrick Allen O'Donagough, for never did he lose an opportunity of putting his time to profit, let it occur at what period of twenty-four hours it might. It may be thought, perhaps, that, in this statement of Mr. O'Donagough's possessions, I have carelessly overlooked the very showy furniture of his handsome house in Curzon-street; but, in point of fact, I have been strictly accurate inasmuch as no single article of that furniture had been paid for, and consequently, in a statement so precise as the present, it could not properly have been brought to account.

Mr. O'Donagough was in the act of mentally running over

precisely the same figures as I have been now laying before the reader, when the door of his library opened and his wife appeared. The interview, which was about to take place, would have been considerably more agreeable to the gentleman's feelings, had he deemed it advisable, in stating to his lady the sudden necessity for breaking up his London establishment, to have indulged in the same imaginative species of narrative as that in which he had conveyed the same information to his daughter. But after a moment's consideration, his admirable judgment decided him against attempting anything of the kind; for he felt that, in the first place, it would rob him of the advantage he might hope to obtain from the very acute faculties of his admirable wife; and secondly, those very acute faculties, now fully ripened into strong practical sharpness, would be exceedingly likely to detect what was purely inventive, and thereby render his explanation of no effect.

Determined, therefore, to be as candid in his exposition of facts as if he had been stating matters to his own conscience, he lost no time in circumlocution.

"Shut the door, wife," he said, rather gravely, as Mrs. O'Donagough came in, and then added, rather in a lower key, "and you may as well bolt it, my dear, and then we shall not be interrupted."

"Dear me, Mr. O'Donagough, how very foolish this is of you!" she replied, but obeyed his command however before she advanced into the room. "I know exactly, word for word, what you are going to say, as well as if you had spoken it every syllable already."

"Do you, my dear?" said O'Donagough. "I doubt it!"

"Yes, I do. You are going to make a preachment as long as my arm about Patty's marriage; and what good is it when the thing is done and over? I know very well that I would rather have had an English lord for her; but there's no use fretting about it, and I will never forgive you as long as I live, if you refuse to give me down a good handsome sum of money out of your last night's winnings to buy the dear creature's wedding clothes. A good deal of it, I know, we may have on credit, but not all, nor anything like all. And, if you please, I want to set about it immediately."

"I have not the least objection in the world, my dear," replied Mr. O'Donagough; "and if you will be kind enough to hear what I was going to say—which has nothing whatever to do with Patty—you shall set out and buy the wedding clothes immediately after, if you like it."

Mrs. O'Donagough was too reasonable a woman to ask for a fairer promise than this, and accordingly she placed herself in the chair that her daughter had just before occupied, and replied—

"Now, then, Donny!" with the most sweet-tempered smile in the world.

"It is rather an awkward thing, my dear, that I have got to mention to you, and if you were not the devilish clever woman that you are, I should never tell you of it at all. But if you will

set your wit side by side with mine, I am not the least bit afraid but what we shall get through the business perfectly well, and do better, for what I know, than if it had never happened."

"And what *has* happened?" replied his wife, in an accent of considerable alarm.

"Why, first and foremost, that hideous old maid, Elizabeth Peters, hit off the truth last night as cleverly as if she had been the witch she looks like, and obligingly addressed me as Major Allen before Mrs. Stephenson, civilly requesting me to tell her why I had changed my name."

"Insolent wretch!—see if I won't be revenged of her impertinence," exclaimed the sympathising wife.

"And what did you say to her, my dear?"

"Why, my love, I had not time to say much, because that very fascinating personage, Mrs. Stephenson, and this above-mentioned Miss Elizabeth Peters, had politely concealed themselves behind the curtains of the recess, in order to watch me play piquet with Mr. Ronaldson. Foxcroft was in the room with us, and, good-natured fellow, as you know he is, he gave me, half in fun, you know, of course, a hint or two of the cards Ronaldson held—all which these charming ladies saw, and at the very moment when I was in the act of making so good a thing of it as would have made it signify but little whether Patty's Don were rich or poor, they popped out of their hiding-place, and told Ronaldson not to sign the check, for that he had been *cheated*."

"Audacious wretches!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Donagough, her expressive countenance beaming with rage. "Oh, my dearest Donny! had I been there, they had dared not for their lives have done it. In your own house too!—when they were enjoying the protection of your roof, and revelling in the magnificence of your splendid hospitality! Surely it is unprecedented in the annals of visiting. They shall be exposed for it. They shall be known for what they are, or my name is not O'Donagough. Why, Donny, I shall never again be able to own my connection with them. They have disgraced themselves for ever!"

"All very true, my dear," replied her husband, composedly. "But, nevertheless, Ronaldson did not *sign* the check—and I shall be obliged to leave the country with as little delay as possible."

"Leave the country? Leave Curzon-street? And just when I am going to show off my darling Patty everywhere, as the youngest and most beautiful married woman in London! Oh, it is impossible! You never can be such a brute!" cried the unhappy Mrs. O'Donagough, in the most piercing accents imaginable.

"You do not appear to see this affair with your usual clear-headed good sense, my dear," replied her husband, with exemplary gentleness of voice and manner. "Perhaps you are not aware that if I do not take myself off, and *that* immediately, the Secretary of State for the Home Department will have all the trouble upon his own hands. But even in that case, you perceive, your

bridal gaieties would be equally defeated, for we should go, at least I should, and under the circumstances, I don't think you would find your residence here at all agreeable afterwards."

"What *do* you mean, Donny?" said the vexed lady, looking at his placid countenance with considerable indignation. "What have all the secretaries of state in the world to do with our staying in this beautiful house or leaving it? If you are only joking, and making fun of me, as you do with that fool Foxcroft, I never will forgive you as long as I live."

"That would be very terrible, my dear," he mildly replied. "But fortunately at this moment I run no risk of the kind; for I certainly do not consider the matter as partaking of the least degree of the nature of a joke. Nor do I see anything like fun in being transported for life."

"Transported!" shrieked Mrs. O'Donagough. "You don't mean it?—you don't mean to say, husband, that you have really been such a fool as to do anything to put you in the power of those horrid women? You don't mean to tell me *that*? Oh, Donny! Donny! I shall go mad!"

"God forbid, my dear," he replied, without varying a muscle of his truly philosophical physiognomy. "Anything of the kind would be exceedingly troublesome just now. But really, my dear, you agitate yourself much more than there is any occasion for; and to tell you the truth, I thought my Barnaby was too much a woman of the world to suffer such an occurrence as this to shake her courage so violently. If you will but see the thing in a proper light, and give me your assistance in getting everything ready, and in giving the whole affair rather the appearance of a party of pleasure, than anything else, I have no doubt that we shall do extremely well. There are many people of very high fashion in the United States, particularly at New Orleans, and in the other slave states, and if we contrive to manage our affairs *only* as well as we have done before, my dear, you may depend upon it we shall soon find ourselves in the very highest rank of society, and perhaps better off than we have ever been in our lives."

Mrs. O'Donagough was a woman of strong feelings, yet nevertheless she was always, or almost always, amenable to reason, and long before her husband had ceased speaking, her fine spirit had recovered its tone; she felt able, and perfectly willing too, to take the particular bull, which now appeared to face her, by the horns, and by the noble exercise of the faculties of which she felt proudly conscious, to do battle with whatever difficulties might assail her, nothing doubting, from the hints her judicious husband had thrown out, that her reward would now be, what it had so often been before, namely, the placing herself considerably in advance of all her fellow-creatures, the envied of many, and the admired of all. From this point the conversation proceeded in a tone of conjugal confidence and sympathy, that might have served as a model to all

the wedded sons and daughters of Eve; and no greater proof can be given of the happiness of such a self-contented temperament as that of my heroine, than the fact, that the interview which brought to her knowledge the proof of her husband's standing in the most imminent peril of being transported for life, left her in a state of spirits the most animated and the most happy that can be conceived.

Just as she was going to take her departure, in order to set about her own preparations, and leave her husband at liberty to make his, she suddenly stopped short and exclaimed—"But, my dear Donny, what in the world am I to say to those dear, good Perkinses? and to that handsome creature, Tornornio? Upon my word, that must be thought of."

"It has been thought of, my Barnaby," returned her husband, with a playful smile that quite illuminated his countenance. "Patty will tell you; but no," he added, "it will be safest for me to give you a sketch of the thing myself, that you may make no blunders when you hear the dear child allude to it. Just listen to me my dear, and I will make you understand *why* it is that I am obliged to leave the country."

Mr. O'Donagough then, with some humour and very considerable enjoyment, ran over the heads of the history he had been recounting to Patty concerning his early passion, and, for a few gay moments felonies, flittings, transport-ships, and Botany Bay, were all forgotten, and both the gentleman and lady laughed heartily.

"There certainly never was anything like you, Donny!" said the lady, as soon as he had finished; "you have made my sides ache, I promise you."

"And there certainly never was anything like you, my dear," he replied, with a very gallant bow. "I have often told you that you were a wife made on purpose for me—and so you are."

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Mrs. O'Donagough re-entered the drawing-room, she found Patty and her husband seated upon one sofa, and the two Miss Perkinses on another. The two former were deeply engaged in a whispering conversation, the subject of which, as the well-satisfied mother rightly imagined, was those passages in the early history of the bride's father, with which she had that morning been made acquainted. The two latter did not appear to be conversing at all, and to say truth, looked very particularly forsaken and forlorn. It was to this group that Mrs. O'Donagough immediately addressed herself, for she, too, felt a pleasure in the exercise of the inventive faculty, which was almost equal to that of her husband.

"Oh, my dear girls!" she began, "what a history I have been

listening to! such a story has come out! Mercy on me! I hardly know whether I stand on my head or my heels!"

"Oh, dear me! What is it?" cried Miss Louisa, divided between fright and curiosity, for Mrs. O'Donagough, by pressing her right hand strongly against her left side, sighing deeply, and casting up her eyes towards the ceiling, gave her great reason to fear that there was some mixture of the terrible in what she was about to hear.

"I dare say it is the same thing that my beloved Patty is communicating to her husband," said Miss Matilda, eagerly. "Do, dearest Mrs. O'Donagough, let me hear it directly. You must know how devotedly I am attached to you all, and whatever concerns any one of the dear family, is just the same to my poor heart, as if it belonged to myself."

"You are a good soul, Matilda, as ever lived, and so is Louisa too. So sit you down, one on each side of me, and you shall hear it; though I declare to heaven my hair actually stands on end upon my head at the very idea of repeating it."

Saying these words, Mrs. O'Donagough seated herself in the middle of her sofa, and taking in each of her own hands one of those belonging to Miss Louisa and to Miss Matilda Perkins, she began to repeat the history she had heard from her husband, embellishing it a little as she went on, by sundry feminine traits of impassioned tenderness on the part of the young countess, and concluding with a hint that the untimely demise of that noble personage was the consequence of her unconquerable passion for Mr. O'Donagough.

The only part of the history, as recounted by that gentleman to his daughter, which did not appear in the present version, was that which seemed to infer a possibility that Patty might be the offspring of the lady alluded to, and not of the fond mother who so gloried in calling her daughter. Mr. O'Donagough showed considerable knowledge of human nature in omitting this part of the joke when discoursing on the subject to his wife. He felt that there were things which might not safely be mentioned, even in jest, and that *this* was one of them. It would be difficult, nay, perhaps impossible, to find words capable of doing justice to the feelings of the Misses Perkins as they listened to this soul-stirring narrative. Disjointed expletives were all they could utter; but clasped hands, lifted eyes, and long-drawn breath, gave ample testimony to the powerful emotion which shook their respective frames. At length the predominating feeling of Miss Matilda found vent in words having some show of meaning, for she uttered distinctly the following:—

"And what, my adored Mrs. O'Donagough, is it your intention to do? Go, it is plain, you must—but where?"

"Oh! in such a case as this," replied my heroine, "there is but one country in the world that a superior-minded man, like Mr. O'Donagough, would think of for a moment. Of course we shall

go to the United States—that is, to the most fashionable part of the country. You may guess that I should not think of any other. And there I have no doubt we shall be exceedingly happy. O'Donough is exactly the man to be popular in a free country. All his principles and ideas are upon the noblest and most extended scale; and I know that I and Patty, too, are particularly well fitted to live happily in a country where there are slaves; in fact it is the only sort of servant in whom one can find any real comfort, and I confess to you, my dear girls, that upon the whole, I expect we shall enjoy ourselves famously."

"I have not the least doubt in the world, my dearest friend!" exclaimed Miss Matilda. "I would to heaven I was going with you!"

"Then so you shall, by jingo!" exclaimed the bride, who had overheard the speech of her favourite. "If I say the word, it's as good as done; and that you know, Matilda—nobody better. If I had my way when I was plain Patty O'Donagough, I leave you to guess if I am likely to be disappointed, and contradicted, and plagued, and disobeyed *now* that I am a married woman, and the wife of a Don."

"Dearest Patty!—ever, ever the same!" cried Miss Matilda, with vehement emotion. "What say you, my dearest Mrs. O'Donagough? Do you think that we might be permitted to join your delightful party? I feel sure that both Louisa and myself would know no happiness like that of devoting ourselves to you."

"Upon my life, girls, I should like it of all things; for I am sure that I shall want somebody, particularly just at first, to talk to, and to help me to settle things. Of course, my dears, you know that you would have to pay all your own expenses—that's a matter of course—and then, if Donny does not object, I won't. But what does Louisa say to it? I have not heard her voice yet."

Upon being thus appealed to, Miss Louisa ventured to say, though her sister's eyes shot daggers at her the while, that she did not think either Matilda or herself young enough to venture upon going to a quite new country, of which they knew nothing, except that it was many a thousand of miles off, which would make it exceedingly difficult to come back again.

"Louisa Perkins! you are a fool, if ever there was one born!" exclaimed Madame Tornorino, "and you may say that I told you so."

Mrs. O'Donagough laughed aloud, and said—

"Go where you will, Patty, gentle and simple must all agree that you have a tongue in your head. But never mind her, Louisa. You have a right to your say as well as another, and your opinion is, that America is a great way off. So it is, my dear. And you need not mind Patty's impudence the least bit in the world."

Miss Louisa Perkins seemed to be of the same opinion, and certainly looked as if her equanimity was in no danger of being shaken by that lively lady's sallies. But her feelings were differently con-

stituted with respect to her sister; for when Miss Matilda, having seized upon her shawl, and wrapped it energetically round her said, "Come along, sister!" she really looked as white as a sheet.

"Yes, Matilda, you had better go away now, child," observed Mrs. O'Donagough, waving them off with her hand. "It is quite impossible that I can sit still to reason upon the subject, when I have such an immensity to do. You had better talk the matter over together. All I have to say is, that if you are ready to pay all your expenses, and like to go, I shall make no objection, if Donny makes none—and you know how excessively fond he is of you both!"

"God bless you, dearest Mrs. O'Donagough!" sighed Matilda, as she pressed the hand of her condescending friend. "Oh, how I should glory in waiting upon you like your humblest servant in any land in the world that you could take me to!"

"You are a very good girl, Matilda," replied Mrs. O'Donagough, "and I dare say Louisa will think better of it."

But Louisa continued to maintain her ominous aspect, and with a silent, slow, and melancholy step, followed her sister into the street.

The maiden sisters walked along Curzon-street, turned so as to reach Park-lane, crossed into the Park, and still without exchanging a single word. Louisa was melancholy—Matilda, moody. But having at length reached that semi-sylvan path which stretches across the green sward towards Brompton, the full heart of the younger sister swelled too vehemently to be longer restrained, and she uttered the following words:—

"If there is one misfortune in the world more hard to bear than all the rest, it is the being tied up to a person too old and too stupid for anything."

The meek-spirited Louisa, who knew that a storm must come, had been actually quivering, inside and out, from head to foot, in the expectation of it; and though the breeze that now began to whistle in her ears was not of the most balmy or gentle quality, she still felt in some sort relieved that it had begun, probably because the evils we anticipate are always more terrible in our imaginings than in the reality. It was, therefore, with a very perceptible attempt at a cheerful manner that she replied—

"Come, dear Matilda! don't fret yourself! You can't think how it spoils your good looks. And besides, my dear sister, you ought to remember that if two people *are* tied together, as you call it, the one young and the other old, the one clever and the other stupid, the clever and young one has so much the best of it, that she ought to thank God day and night that she is not the other one."

"It is much that I have to thank God for, isn't it?" bittely replied the unfortunate *cadette*—"I, that never do, never can, and never shall, I suppose, have any one single thing that I wish for! Whatever you say, Louisa, I must beg that you will not be so dis-

gustingly hypocritical as to pretend to tell me I am not unhappy. Oh! I am miserable!"

"I do believe you are, my poor dear Matilda," returned the elder, her eyes filling with tears, "and that it is which prevents my being so perfectly happy as the goodness of God ought to make me; for to tell you the truth, I don't a bit mind being old and stupid—because I have got used to it, I suppose. But I *do* mind seeing you fret, and pine and take on so, and all because nobody just happens to come in the way for you to be married to."

"Don't speak of that, if you please. You had much better let that subject alone," interrupted Matilda, in accents as little soothing as it is easy to imagine. "Unless, indeed, you *wish* to torture me, which may very likely be the case; and if so, you cannot do better than go on."

"Oh! Matilda! Matilda! how can you speak so? I never in my whole life wished to do anything in the world but please you. And God knows, I love you quite as dearly as I do myself, or I might say *better*, and that without telling any fib, for I would always a great deal rather have you pleased than be pleased myself; and, be as angry as you will with me, Matilda, you cannot say it is my fault that you are not married yet."

"Not say it is your fault?" screamed Matilda, suddenly standing still, and turning round so as to throw a broadside of indignant eye-beams under the bonnet of her suffering sister; "*not* your fault? That passes by far anything that I could have thought it possible for a human being to utter! Not your fault that I am not married! And who was it then, if you please, who prevented my being at this very moment Mrs. Foxcroft? I can bear anything better than falsehood, Miss Louisa Perkins. And, therefore, I will just beg you, as a favour, never to say that again."

"Glad and glad shall I be to leave off saying anything that you don't like to hear, Matilda; but sometimes I don't find out what it is till too late. We will never talk any more about Mr. Foxcroft then. It is the best resolution we can take, for we know he is a bad man, and not worth anybody's talking about."

"And *that* I suppose you say to please me too, knowing as you do, cruel, hard-hearted creature, that I still dote upon him to distraction!" replied Matilda, in violent agitation. "Poor, poor Foxcroft!" she added, while the embroidered pocket-handkerchief which she carried was raised to her eyes; "how different would now have been your fate had you fallen into other hands. His only fault under heaven was the excess of his love for me. His fond heart shrunk from the idea of seeing me living upon an income that he thought unworthy of my taste and refinement, and for this, and this only, you lacerate my soul, by making me listen to your eternal abuse of him."

"Indeed I am very sorry to hear you are so much in love with him still," returned her sister; "and rather than that, I do think, my dear, that it is better to remind you of what you heard yourself,

you know ; I mean his wanting so very much to marry me for the sake of my little fortune."

"He never wanted to marry you," replied the indignant Matilda. "You totally mistook his meaning—I am sure of it. All his object was to endeavour to soften your heart towards me, and persuade you, if it was possible, into fairly dividing your fortune between us. And this you have chosen to twist and turn into his offering to marry you. But this is only of a piece with all the rest. You were born to tyrannise over me, and destroy me, and nothing is left for me but to submit. Oh ! how often," she added, with a deep groan, and casting her eyes upon the Serpentine River, which they were at that moment passing, "how often do I long to plunge into that placid water, and bury my misery in it for ever."

Miss Matilda Perkins had certainly, during her thirty-six years of existence, tried pretty nearly every species of device for the management and subjugation of her truly affectionate elder sister ; but somehow or other, it had never before occurred to her that she might threaten suicide ; and now it was probably only the opportune sight of the water which had suggested the idea. But whatever the cause, she speedily felt inclined to bless the effect ; for never before had she, even in her most energetic moments of eloquence, uttered words productive of such powerful results. Miss Louisa turned as pale as ashes, and trembled visibly in every limb ; she clutched the arm of her sister with convulsive strength, and hurried her onward, though literally without the power of speaking a single word.

The effect of her experiment was not lost on Miss Matilda ; she attempted not to break the really awful silence which now reigned between them, but suffered her sister to drag her onward unresistingly till they had reached their own door. The knocker was made to do its office, but still they spoke not, and the door being opened, they mounted, Miss Matilda first, and Miss Louisa afterwards, to their drawing-room. There the really miserable elder sister seated herself, and burst into tears. The younger permitted them to flow for some minutes uninterruptedly, assuming meanwhile herself what she intended should be an aspect of dogged despair. At length, the poor Louisa endeavoured to rally ; she drew off her gloves, and tidily rolled them up ; then removed her shawl from her shoulders, and began a similar notable process upon it, smoothing and folding it upon her knee, but certainly looking all the time as miserable as it was well possible to be. Matilda watched her closely ; and perceiving that, notwithstanding her melancholy, she was gradually recovering from the shock she had received, and returning too nearly to the usual sensations of daily existence, she took off her bonnet, which she threw down (notwithstanding it had a new feather in it) with an air highly theatrical, shook back her ringlets, stood up, approached her sister, placed herself immediately before her, and thus addressed her—

"Louisa!—The time is come when it is absolutely necessary

that we should understand one another. The existence I have been leading under your care and control, has become much too painful to endure, and I have come at length to the firm determination of changing or of ending it. The choice, Louisa, as to whether I shall make some effort to lessen the misery I endure, or DESTROY MYSELF, I shall leave wholly to you. If you will immediately, readily, and cheerfully consent to accompany our friends, the O'Donagoughs, to America, I will consent to live, and will exert myself to the very utmost to render existence to both of us more happy in the new world than it has ever been in the old. But if you refuse this, if you persist in keeping me chained to this sterile land, where the best and tenderest feelings of the human heart are checked and blighted by the constant fear of not having money enough to marry upon—if, I say, you do this, instead of permitting me to try my chance in a new world, I solemnly declare to you, that I will put an end to my life; and when the awful deed is done, you may learn, too late, the danger of torturing the human soul beyond its powers of endurance. Now then, Louisa, speak! Decide! I abide your decision, and you must abide its consequences!"

Inexpressibly terrified at these dreadful words, the unhappy Louisa was ready to grant all and everything that was demanded of her; and eagerly throwing her arms round the tall, thin figure of her sister, as she stood before her, she exclaimed—

"Upon one condition, Matilda, I agree to everything. You shall go, we will both go whenever and wherever you will, if you will only make me one promise."

"Name it," said Matilda, eagerly.

"Only promise me, my dearest sister, that if I consent to your wishes in this, you will never think of killing yourself. Not even if you should not happen to get any gentleman to marry you in America."

"I promise," responded Matilda, solemnly.

Louisa exclaimed, "Thank God!" but the next moment heaved a heavy sigh. Whether this was caused by the remembrance of her own promise, or breathed as a relief from the fulness of joy occasioned by that of her sister, may be doubtful. But be this as it may, the business was settled. Matilda, in a cheerful voice, reminded her sister that a gentleman who had the eye of all the state authorities fixed upon him, like Mr. O'Donagough, would not be permitted to linger long after receiving notice that he was to go. And having given this necessary hint, she instantly set to work herself upon drawers and boxes, and by the vigorous earnestness of her labours, gave the strongest proof of the vivacity of the feelings which prompted them.

It is needless to follow the preparations of the party thus about to leave England together for the United States; suffice it to say, that every one of them, including Don Espartero Christinino Tornorino, was so active and expert in the several operations they

were called upon to perform, that in less than a week their passage was taken in a fine ship lying in the river and bound for New Orleans, their goods packed and on board, their various affairs, agencies, and respective money concerns satisfactorily settled, and one and all of them perfectly ready to go on board.

The above-mentioned Don, indeed, though hitherto so slightly known to the reader, and rather to be considered as a stranger than an old acquaintance, will be found hereafter to possess many noble qualities, well deserving a share in the affectionate feelings, which I flatter myself his companions have already excited. The only circumstance preliminary to their sailing, which it is farther necessary to mention, is, that the principal personage, and he who was considered on all sides as the hero of the expedition, decided, after giving a good deal of consideration to the subject, that for many reasons, into which it is totally unnecessary to enter, it would be advisable that he should not appear in America under either of his former appellations; but, as a still farther compliment to his ever-admired wife, they should assume the style and title of Major and Mrs. ALLEN BARNABY.

CHAPTER VI.

THE mind of a passenger on board a merchant-vessel working her way up the Thames, with very little wind, and that little not above half favourable, must be exceedingly preoccupied if he do not find this part of his expedition very long and very dull. But notwithstanding the great variety of temperament by which the various individuals of the party we are about to accompany were distinguished, there was not one of them who, strictly speaking, could be said to suffer from this evil.

Miss Louisa Perkins, indeed, might, to a superficial observer, have been classed as one of the above-named victims of a slow progress through a disagreeable region. But though her pale, thin visage had no more movement or animation in it than that of a whiting boiled yesterday, though her very light-gray eyes had a plentiful lack of speculation in them, and though she spoke not and moved not, I, who have the happy privilege of knowing every thought of her heart, take upon me to declare that no idea that the river was long or dull ever entered her head. She was there, poor thing, seated on the pea-green bench, formed by the top of the chicken-coop, on purpose to be miserable. Not that her temper was of that sour quality which leads its possessor to find an indulgence in being uncontrolledly cross; on the contrary, the temper of Miss Louisa was essentially gentle and kind; but this gentleness and this kindness had led her on the present occasion to do precisely the very thing that she most abhorred, and, in truth, she could hardly choose but be miserable. She hated every country

and everything that was not English, and everything that was American, most of all she loathed the smell of a ship, she detested the sea, and had never been in a boat to cross a ferry without being *rather* sick. And to add to all this, she greatly doubted the efficacy of their present scheme for remedying the staple misery of her sister's existence, that is to say, she greatly doubted the probability of finding an American gentleman more inclined to marry a young lady of six-and-thirty without money than an English one. So that, on the whole, it was hardly possible that she could be otherwise than sad; her only comfort, as she gazed upon the dirty water through which the vessel was crawling, being the reflection that she had saved her sister from jumping into some very like it.

As to the hero of the party—as I have already very fitly designated Major Allen Barnaby—he stood in a manly and commanding attitude; his arms a-kimbo, and his legs “a-straddle,” in the style of one of the *Sieur David's* classic Greeks, sometimes looking ahead, sometimes looking astern, but always with an air of consciousness that the bark which bore him and his fortunes carried no ordinary freight. The river was neither long nor dull to him—could he forget how he last navigated in the same direction?—could he forget *HOW* much he had added to his little hoard since he passed up it in the other?—could he fail to feel that his glorious intellect and his happy star had enabled him again and again to rise triumphant out of misfortunes, which must have overwhelmed a man of lesser genius? And remembering all this, could he do otherwise than look forward with bold hope and unshrinking confidence to the fresh career that was opening before him? To him the tedious river voyage was but a soothing interval, during which he could indulge, without interruption or restraint, in a series of exciting calculations and a succession of reveries, each bringing flatteringly before his mind's eye the immense superiority of the new world over the old in all the *arts* of a highly advanced state of society, and a complacent smile settled on his features as he thought of it.

Mrs. O'Donagough, to do her justice, seldom felt anything to be tedious; she could always find or make opportunities for displaying both her mind and body to advantage: and who that does this, can ever find any portion of existence fatiguing? Before the ship reached the Downs, she had made pretty nearly every sailor on board, as well as the captain and the three mates, understand that she knew very nearly as much about a ship as they did; that—besides all the personal beauty which remained to her (and she really managed to take off ten years of her fifty-five much better than the generality of those who try their talents at the same operation), besides all that remained—she clearly made them all understand that she had, some few years ago, been infinitely handsomer still. To the cook she gave some admirable instructions in ship cookery. On the mind of the steward she strongly impressed

the necessity of furnishing the passengers, particularly the ladies, with a liberal allowance of *good* toddy if he wished to keep them from the horrors of sea-sickness; and she made the little black cabin-boy thoroughly understand that, if ever he hoped to see the colour of her money, he must never fail to come to her whenever she called, let who would want him elsewhere. With all this to be done, could she find the river voyage too long?

As to Don Tornorino and his lady, they had both mutually and separately much to amuse them. The gentleman had very many reasons for feeling himself happy and contented, and truly he was so; but to what an extent no one can guess who is unacquainted with his previous history, and as his fate is now so closely united to that of the amiable race to whose memoirs I am thus sedulously devoting myself, a slight sketch of his early life may be desirable.

As I pique myself upon the unvarnished truth of my narratives, I shall honestly confess to the reader that Don Espartero *et cætera* Tornorino was not by birth an hidalgo; on the contrary, indeed, his mother was a washerwoman and his father a tailor. But in a country where the wholesome exercise of revolution is going on so prosperously as it has been long doing in Spain, it matters little what a man's father may be, provided he himself knows how to profit by the delightful whirlwind of accidents by which he is sure to be surrounded.

The young Tornorino was a very pretty boy, and he was a sharp boy; and moreover he was a very musical boy; and by the help of all these good gifts together, there were few youngsters in that not very tranquil country who had so pleasant a life. He was very religious, too, and all the priests that were left in Madrid made much of him. He both danced and sung to perfection, and Juan Christino delighted in him.

Several seamstresses were willing to make him shirts for nothing; and there was not a cook's shop in the city, that had a woman in any part of the establishment, where he might not get the very best of dinners for the asking. Besides all this, his excellent and patriotic father had become a *chef-d'escadron* to some faction or other, I really forget what, and his mother, lady of the bedchamber to her Majesty; so that his position in society appeared as assured as it was brilliant, and a happier young Don never strutted through the highways and byways of Madrid than the young raven-haired Tornorino.

All this lasted till he was twenty-four years old and three months, and then, poor fellow, just as he had got confirmed in every habit of extravagance, luxury, and indulgence, he was literally turned from the court into the gutter. His father was shot as a traitor, having very unluckily been caught in the fact of appropriating some small regimental funds that happened to come in his way. His mother was discarded from her high and very distinguished office, and a young milliner installed in her place; and the poor petted son, for no reason in the world that I know of, save

that he had outlived the royal lady's favour, was also informed that his attendance was no longer required. The unfortunate widow of the gallant *chef-d'escadron* died of starvation within the year, and her accomplished son sold eleven of his twelve guitars, all his gold snuff-boxes, and five of his six sword-knots, in order to convey himself to England, and try his fortune there.

And a dismal fortune it proved, poor fellow! As soon as the few naps he had brought with him had disappeared, he tried a greater variety of expedients to get more than I have time to record. Among other things he played in the orchestra at Drury Lane, and danced in the ballets at Covent Garden—he gave lessons in most living languages to all who would be so kind as to learn, and offered to teach the guitar for a shilling a lesson.

But somehow or other nothing succeeded with him. He was almost always taking a siesta when he ought to have been rehearsing at the theatre; and he no sooner got a pupil than he began making love to the mother or the sister, and so got kicked into the street. Then every farthing of money he got he was *obliged* to spend at some Leicester-square *restaurant* where he could obtain a *plat* or two, seasoned with a little garlic, for he felt as if he really must die if he attempted to swallow a chop or a steak prepared for him at his lodgings. But after all, there was really as little harm in him as could reasonably have been expected under the circumstances; and amongst the multitudinous patriots with which London abounds, Patty might easily have done worse.

The variety of pleasant thoughts which now chased each other through the young man's head as he sat beside his bride, quietly and smilingly receiving and returning her caresses, was perfectly delightful. By far the most distinguishing feature of his mind was a love of ease, and, indeed, of indulgence of all kinds, and this had made the privations endured since reaching England something almost too dreadful to think of. His reverence for the father and mother of his young wife knew no bounds. He saw that their manner of living was exceedingly far removed (as far at least as he could judge of it) from dry mutton-chops, hard beef-steaks, black cold potatoes, and muddy beer. These various articles had formed a large portion of his misery for the last four years; and the idea that he was now to live daintily (comparatively speaking) and do no work, wrapped his senses in a sort of sweet elysium that kept him in a continual smile. Moreover, he loathed, hated, and abominated the climate of England to a degree, that made the act of sailing away from it something little short of rapture. He was going to see the sun again! The very name of New Orleans, whenever it reached his ears, caused him to display his well-set white teeth to an unmitigated excess; and so perfectly well satisfied was he with his present position, that had Queen Christina stood before him, he would have snapped his fingers at her, and would hardly have consented to change it, had the great general whose name he had assumed offered his own to him instead.

As for Patty—nobody who knows Patty could doubt for a moment her being in a state of perfect felicity; for in spite of Jack and all his false-heartedness she was married, and instead of having one kiss to talk about, she had now more than she could count, and the river seemed to her a very pleasant river, the wind, a very good wind, and the ship, a very nice ship.

But of all this happy, well-contented party, the most supremely happy, and the most rapturously well-contented was beyond all question Miss Matilda Perkins. The annoyances that the Don was leaving behind him were light indeed compared to the various and for-ever recurring sources of agony which had lacerated her tender bosom for years.

Never, perhaps, had any woman loved so often and so devotedly! Oh! she felt to the very centre of her soul that she deserved to be loved again, and the having failed of this well-merited reward, and that too through at least twenty years of unremitting though various affection, had left a bitterness of indignation at her heart, which poisoned all her hours, and rendered her life one mournful, long-drawn, love-lorn sigh. But now, how delightfully was all around her changed! What a rainbow radiance fell upon every thought of the future.

Hope sprang aloft upon exulting wings;

the bark that supported her slight figure, as she gracefully leaned over the taffrail, seemed wafted by breezes from heaven, and its sails filled by the soft sweet breath of love.

Miss Matilda was, in her way, a great reader; she had dipped into several accounts of America, and she was quite aware how exceedingly the natives were behind-hand in all matters of grace and fashion. What an enormous advantage, therefore, would this give her over all the native daughters of the land! How certain did she feel that her knowledge of life, her elegant manners, her particularly small waist, and two or three new bonnets and dresses which she had bought at the bazaar two days before she set off, would place her in a position of immeasurable superiority above everybody that she was at all likely to be seen with! In short, her swelling heart felt no fears for the result; and the only thing approaching anxiety which crossed her mind was the question whether it would be best for her to accept the first man that offered, or wait a little to take the advantage of choice.

Miss Matilda certainly did not mean to assimilate herself to a housemaid; nevertheless, having a general idea that a certain letter concerning Australia, which she had heard greatly admired, was somehow or other about America, she could not but recall with interest the historical fact therein mentioned, which records that marriageable females arriving from the motherland were so eagerly sought in wedlock there, that proposals were made to them as they approached the land through speaking-trumpets. Had this circumstance been recalled to the mind of Miss Matilda as one which had

influenced her wish to leave England, it is highly probable that she would have rejected the suggestion with disdain, and have declared herself not such a fool as to take for earnest what was perhaps written in jest.

It is, however, unquestionably certain that there had been moments in the course of the last ten years of Miss Matilda Perkins's existence, during which this graphic image of abounding husbands had returned again and again to her fancy, throwing a sort of El Dorado halo around the name of America, which had not been without its effect.

"I know it is put down there most likely in the way of a joke," she had one day said to herself, in musing monologue; "but for all that, I dare say it means something. There is no fire without smoke." And Miss Matilda looked at the map.

But how could her wildest dreams at that time have painted the possibility of her ever traversing such a world of water? Yet here she was, beyond the possibility of a doubt, actually embarked on board a ship bound to America! The fact was so extraordinary, so astounding, so delightful, that sometimes it seemed to transcend all reasonable belief, and at others to elevate her spirits almost beyond the power of restraining them within proper limits. Such a delightful party too! Her *most* particular friend, a young married woman! proverbially the best of chaperons! And then, her husband so fond of her! Such happiness between them! continually suggesting to every one who saw them the dear idea of matrimony, as the easiest and surest mode of attaining perfect felicity! Can we wonder that the soul of Miss Matilda was swimming in bliss, as buoyantly as the ship was swimming upon the waters?

And thus they made their way down "the majestic bosom of the Thames;" the only grumbling observation proceeding from the lips of poor Louisa. And that was not much; she only muttered to herself—"It is a long lane, they say, that has no turning; but, oh dear! it is a longer still that has got so many."

CHAPTER VII.

WE will not a second time follow the O'Donagough—henceforth the BARNABY—family step by step, or rather knot by knot, across the Atlantic. After a safe and not particularly long passage, they arrived at the Balize, and being placed under the towage of a steamboat, began to make their way up the lordly, but gloomy-tempered Mississippi.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Major Allen Barnaby—for it was thus he now commanded himself to be constantly designated—"thank God!" he exclaimed, as he sprung on shore on the handsome quay of New Orleans. "We have had a devilish fine passage; but I am not sorry it's over."

"We are none of us sorry it's over, I dare say," replied his portly lady, as soon as she had recovered her balance upon first finding both her feet once more on *terra firma*. "We are the very luckiest creatures upon God's earth, that's certain, major. How the sun shines, don't it."

The facility with which it was probable "Mrs. Barnaby" would fall again into her old habit of calling her husband "major," had, in truth, been one reason why her John William Patrick Allen O'Donagough Barnaby had chosen to assume that title in preference to every other—and the scheme answered completely;—for so naturally did she resume this appellation, endeared to her doubtless by the remembrance of the early days of her love, that from that time forward she was never known to blunder when addressing him, excepting that now and then at the name of Allen, which he had slipped in before that of Barnaby, as if to identify himself, she would come to a full stop.

"And now, captain," said the restored major, "can you lend us a lad just to take these few light articles that the custom-house gentlemen have done with, and show us the way to the boarding-house you were talking about."

"Cæsar, cabin-boy, shall go along with ye," replied the captain. "Only I'm thinking that Madam Carmichael will hardly, it may be, have place enough to put you all up, and without notice given too. But for all that, you had best go to her and say I sent you. She'll be able, I expect, to get some of ye lodged out of the house if there is not room in it."

The whole party amounting, as we know, to half a dozen, were by this time collected in a knot, and ready to start. On the whole, perhaps, they did not present a very elegant *coup-d'œil*, but it is rarely that any ladies appear to advantage on arriving from a voyage. Yet they had all, save the poor, worn-out Miss Louisa, done the best they could towards restoring their appearance. Mrs. Barnaby had liberally refreshed her rouge, and put on a clean collar—but her "front" was sadly out of repair, being, in fact, entirely worn out, and permitting her copious locks of dappled gray to peep forth in various places from amidst the scanty sable, with which it was her object to conceal them. Madame Tornorino, however, certainly looked a great deal handsomer than she ever did before in the whole course of her life, for she was almost pale, and considerably thinner than before her voyage; but her costume was anything but in good repair, and she had *not*, like her mamma, thought it necessary to put on a clean collar. The hopeful, ardent-minded Matilda, was unhappily thinner than ever, and so pale that as she turned her eyes from her own cheeks, as shown to her once at a time in the useful little glass set at the back of her hair-brush, as she turned her eyes from those pale cheeks to the glowing bloom on those of Mrs. Barnaby, she suddenly and secretly came to the resolution, that for the future she would herself (in a moderate way) take advantage of the aid which nature, with her usual provident

kindness, has prepared for the fading carnations of females of delicate constitution. For the present, however, this was out of her power, as Mrs. Barnaby's rouge was always locked up; but she thought that at the present moment she should lose little by the pallid delicacy, which, in consideration of her long voyage, could not but be interesting. She therefore gave all the care that circumstances would permit to other decorations. For how was it possible she could tell *who* she might see? Not only did she put on a clean collar, but a clean cap too; yet she suffered her hair to fall somewhat too languidly on each side of her face, for it was a *little* out of curl. But oh! how she pitied poor dear Mrs. Barnaby for having all her beautiful hair turning gray! and how heartily she thanked heaven in her heart of hearts, that not even her sister Louisa had a gray hair, which plainly showed it was not in the family, and gave her the most charming hope for her own future. So her gauze cap, with its pale pink bows, was set very far back on her head, and the bonnet which was lightly placed upon it had quite the air of a *chapeau de jolie femme*. The two gentlemen, also, had somewhat refreshed their toilets, in compliment to the character given of Mrs. Carmichael by her friend the captain, which was, that she was as first-rate a lady as any in the place, and "unaccountable smart to be sure."

With a light truck to convey such baggage as they were permitted to take from the ship, before the Custom-house had done its duty, the young negro, Cæsar, moved on before them, and the party followed under a broiling sun to the boarding-house.

Excepting Don Tornorino, who luxuriated in the warmth like a humming-bird, the whole set felt ready to lie down and expire before they had traversed half the distance they had to go. But as the major strode resolutely on without flinching, the four ladies felt that they must stride resolutely on too, and they did so with a degree of enduring patience that did them honour. Fortunately, on arriving at the house of Mrs. Carmichael, they were desired to "walk into the keeping-room;" had they been turned from the door, the most of them felt quite certain that they should not have lived to reach another.

It is almost worth while, however, to endure the fervid heat of a southern climate, for the sake of enjoying the delicious devices by which the ingenuity of that very clever creature, man, contrives to quench its terrors, and turn its very torment into luxury.

The apartment into which Mrs. Carmichael's negro footman showed the panting Europeans, was a room of some forty feet long, by twenty wide, and lofty in proportion. The expansive floor was covered by cool-looking matting, and round the walls were ranged a variety of sofas, formed for lounging in every possible attitude of Louisianian indolence. Four ample windows opened like folding-doors upon a balcony, rendered almost impervious to the light, by being on all sides surrounded by Venetian blinds; and on a table within the room stood one or two enormous decanters of water, with

lumps of ice floating in them; tumblers of all sizes, about a dozen lemons, and abundance of sugar; while under the table stood a basket-covered flask of whisky, of a goodly size; a dozen or two of light cane-bottomed chairs were scattered about the room, lying upon many of which, as well as upon the tables and sofas, were a multitude of large feather-fans, the profusion of which might have struck the strangers as a whimsical peculiarity, had not their obvious utility been so very strongly felt.

"My goodness gracious, what a heavenly place!" cried Patty, instantly taking possession of a sofa, throwing herself at full length upon it, and seizing upon the largest fan within her reach. "By your leave, ladies," she added, taking off her bonnet, and tossing it upon the ground, "married women, you know, are always permitted to take liberties."

"What a blessing, to be sure, to come into a room like this, after such a walk," said Mrs. Barnaby, carefully wiping her face, so as to remove as little of her rouge by the operation as possible. "I hope to goodness, major, we arn't to stay in this horrid climate long. However, as long as we *do* stay, we can't be better off than here, so you must loosen your purse-strings, if you please, if it should prove that the elegant lady the captain told us of happens to be rather upish in her prices."

"We'll see about that, my dear," replied her husband. "It will be a great object, to be sure, to get into a place where one can breathe. But money is money, remember, in America as well as in England."

"Il rappelle," said the delighted Spaniard, "the soft atmosphere of Madrid."

"I am sure they must be a most delightful people," cried Matilda, who, though not a married woman, had ventured to follow the example of Patty, and was both lying down and fanning herself without ceremony. "How irresistibly," said she, "all this seems to suggest ideas of—in short, I am certain it must be a most domestic country from the evident care taken to make home agreeable."

As usual, poor Louisa spoke not. Indeed, she had hardly done so since she had left her native land, but gently, unobtrusively, and apart, she groaned.

And now a sound was heard as of the approach of slippers too large for the wearer's feet, and kept on by dint of shoving them onwards at each step, without venturing to raise them from the ground, and then the voice of hard and difficult breathing was perceptible, and then the door of entrance was darkened from side to side, as if a feather bed, exactly not too large to be pushed through it, was being thrust into the room. Of course, the twelve eyes of the new-comers were all turned towards the object thus appearing before them, and notwithstanding the obscurity of the apartment, they one and all very soon became convinced that huge and shapeless as was the approaching mass, it was nevertheless a human being, and moreover a woman.

"Smart," murmured Patty, in a voice not quite audible to the panting dame, "what could that fool of a captain mean?" And certainly, in Patty's acceptation of the word, his application of it might seem strange enough.

The person of Mrs. Carmichael, the dimensions of which were, seen in whatever direction she could be placed, very nearly six feet by four, was not only enormous in size, but so astonishingly out of all ordinary shape, as to make it no easy matter to clothe it at all. It is not very surprising, therefore, considering the prodigious bulk of every limb, whereby every movement became a labour, that Mrs. Carmichael should get into her clothes with as little labour and pains as possible. And then the heat! Poor Mrs. Carmichael suffered dreadfully from the heat, and certainly cared greatly less how her draperies looked in the eyes of others, than how they felt to herself. So her enormous white calico gown, with its colossal hanging sleeves, was fastened so loosely in the front by one single pin, as to create perpetual alarm in the bystanders, as to the stability of the investiture by which this very important portion of her covering was attached. There was, indeed, what might have been about a yard square of pink gauze loosely tucked in around the bust; but even this depended for its adhesion to the same aforesaid pin, and without it must have floated away into air still thinner than itself.

Notwithstanding the immensity of Mrs. Carmichael's person, it was not, as in the case of a preternaturally-expansive oak-tree, the result of advanced age, every year of which had added to its bulk. All the fat which had thus miraculously found a resting-place on the bones of Mrs. Carmichael, had been considerably less than forty years in collecting itself together, and had her face been finished by one chin, instead of three, and the rest of her features in less evident danger of being smothered, she would have been far from ill-looking. Excepting the pink gauze and the white robe already described, with the probable garment under it, together with her large slippers, and probable stockings, she was as much without the foreign aid of ornament as Eve herself. Stays she had none; she wore nothing on her head; nor was there the slightest reason whatever to suppose that she was embarrassed by anything more in the way of clothing than what has already been described.

Excepting the hard breathing, and an occasional ejaculation expressive of fatigue from moving, Mrs. Carmichael uttered nothing for several minutes after she entered the apartment. Having at length made her way to the part of the room where Major Allen Barnaby stood fanning himself, she dropped down upon a large cane chair, without any arms, every part of which, back and all, became so completely invisible, that she seemed to have perched herself on a three-legged stool—having thus deposited her person, she fixed her soft eyes on the major's face, and seemed to expect that he should speak first. But her heavy breathings gave her so much the appearance of being, as yet, unfit for any exertion, that

her visitor was too polite to address her, and it was therefore Mrs. Carmichael herself who at last opened the conversation.

"What is your pleasure, sir?" said she, in a voice which, notwithstanding her want of breath, was harmonious, though somewhat drawling.

"I have called, madam," he replied, "at the request of our friend Captain Tims, to inquire whether you can accomodate our party with board and lodging."

Mrs. Carmichael eyed the numerous group very complacently.

"For the whole kit of you, sir?" she demanded, with a smile as sweet as it was possible a smile could be from lips so overwhelmed by cheeks.

"Yes, madam, for all of us."

"And for a goodish spell, sir?"

"Very likely, madam; but that must depend on circumstances."

"Of course, sir, of course. Well then, I don't know—I rather expect I might make it convene, provided any two of the ladies could lie together"

The two Miss Perkinses exclaimed at the same moment, "Oh, we can do that, ma'am, quite well."

"Well now I calculate it might be done then; but in course you'll be wanting to see the rooms before you agree; and that's what Black Jessy can do for you."

And so saying, she clapped her great soft hands together, and though the sound thus produced was rather a dumb one, it sufficed to bring a smart-looking negress into the room, who having received sufficient orders from her mistress, stepped lightly and not ungracefully forward to do her bidding, turning her face towards the strangers, and displaying her white teeth, as an invitation to them to follow her.

This the "whole kit" did, though with some reluctance, perhaps at being obliged to put themselves in motion again. But the great large house was really as cool as it was possible a New Orleans house in the month of July could be, and they could hardly fail of being satisfied with the well ventilated rooms, clean mosquito bars and handsome wardrobes, which were displayed to them.

"This will do, major, capital, won't it?" said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, in high good humour.

"Yes, my dear; if you will undertake to pay for it," he replied.

"Don't come with any of that sort of nonsense over me, Donny," she replied, forgetting herself for a moment. "I am not going to begin the old Sydney way over again, I promise you. You'll remember, my dear, that I am a little more up to your doings than I was then; and if I give you the assistance of my talents, and keep you up with my respectability and fashion, I shall expect to be comfortably lodged in return, I promise you."

This was, however, all conjugally whispered in the ear of her husband, as they stood apart together for a moment, in a room that

was decidedly the "biggest and the best," and which both of them had tacitly selected as their own.

"We shall see, my dear, we shall see," he replied, without displaying any marks of anger at her remonstrance; "but you know as well as I do that everything must depend upon the chance of finding people that will *suit* us."

"Of course, dear, of course. But take my word for it, major, that you will do nothing to signify, either here or anywhere else if you don't carry it with a high hand at first, and make them understand that you are somebody."

"You are not far wrong there, my dear; and now let's go down again to our Fatima. By the way, this New Orleans beauty makes you look as slender as a girl, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby."

Some thought of the same kind had already passed through the analytical head of Mrs. Allen Barnaby herself, and she felt so kindly disposed towards the person who could produce so agreeable an effect, that the negotiation which followed their return to the keeping-room, was speedily brought to a happy termination.

Poor Miss Louisa Perkins started a little at hearing that she was to pay ten dollars a week for herself and her sister; but permitted herself to be satisfied upon Mrs. Carmichael's proposing to abate one, provided the ladies did not mind sleeping in *rather* a small room up stairs that looked towards the west.

All preliminaries being thus happily settled, the party gladly accepted their obliging hostess's invitation to take possession of the keeping-room and its sofas, till such time as the arrival of their baggage should enable them to settle themselves in their own apartments, and get ready for dinner; the hour for which, she informed them, was five o'clock.

It was now nearly two, and some natural anxiety began to be expressed by the ladies, lest those ever precious objects of interest, their trunks, might not arrive in time.

And now it was that, for the first time, Patty's Don gave evidence that it was possible he might be of some little use, for upon Major Allen Barnaby's declaring that he neither could nor would go out again during the heat of the day, for all the trunks in the world, the young Spaniard declared that the sun was delightful to him, and having received the most distinct instructions from each particular lady, as to which particular box it was especially essential he should get released for her INSTANTLY, he set off upon his mission, and performed it so well, that by four o'clock the whole party were made supremely happy, by finding themselves in the full enjoyment of their unpacked treasures, and as well able to make themselves fine as if they had never left London.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT five o'clock precisely an immense dinner-bell sent its startling sound through every apartment of Mrs. Carmichael's establishment, but lest the uninitiated strangers might not immediately be aware what the sound meant, a brace of negro-girls was sent by the attentive hostess, to tell them that "every body was done finished dressing, and gone down to dinner."

This notice came in welcome time to everybody, except Miss Matilda; but she, poor dear young lady, had failed in no less than three different head-dresses, which she had attempted to arrange with a peculiarly novel effect; and having listened unmoved to her sister's repeated entreaties to "make haste, and not to mind just this first day," and so forth, she was at length obliged to tear herself from her looking-glass, at the bidding of Black Jessy, with half her lank ringlets tucked back, because they would not curl, after being so long trifled with in the fervid atmosphere of Mrs. Carmichael's west room. She was, however, comforted with the consciousness that her dress "sat like wax," and that her tight sleeves made her look uncommonly young. With such elasticity of step as this dear thought sufficed to give her, she preceded her quiet sister down stairs, being ushered into the dining-room by Jessy, just as about eighteen ladies and gentlemen, with Mrs. Carmichael at their head, had taken their places at table.

Some little bustle followed this tardy entrance; but this over, the business of the hour began—a business which in every party varies according to the individual character of those who compose it. Some, as usual, thought most of the nature of what was put upon the table to eat, and others of the nature of those who sat round the table to eat it. Eight out of the twelve of Mrs. Carmichael's previous boarders, were gentlemen, a preponderance highly agreeable to most of the new-comers.

Don, or *Monsieur Tornorino*, as Mrs. Carmichael called him, cared not a straw about the matter, nor would Miss Louisa have paid more attention to it than he did, had it not been that she knew her "poor dear Matilda" would be pleased; a conviction which rendered her pleased too.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby always confessed, that on the whole, she greatly preferred the society of gentlemen to that of ladies. Patty, in this, appeared likely through life to follow her mamma's example. The major had almost given up looking at ladies at all, even to discover whether they were young or old, handsome or ugly, so perfectly was he aware that little or no profit could be made of them. And as for our fair Matilda, her feelings on the occasion may surely be left to the sagacity of the reader to discover.

"Major Allen Barnaby, gentlemen," said Mrs. Carmichael, with a sort of circular bow to the table, "and *Monsieur Tornorino*, his son-in-law."

This, by all the laws of New Orleans elegance, was a proper and sufficient introduction of the whole party, and as such it was received; for as the dinner proceeded, the new guests, whether male or female, were occasionally addressed without reserve by the former ones. Of these former ones, two ladies and two gentlemen were newly-married couples, beginning their married lives by indulging in a "spell of boarding;" the domestic indolence which it permits, rendering it, in all parts of the union, a very favourite portion of human life, but more especially so in the south, where every exertion is considered as a positive evil. These two exceedingly happy couples were known respectively by the names of Mr. and Mrs. Anastasius Grimes, and Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Hucks. The two other ladies were a Mrs. and Miss Beauchamp, and one of the other gentlemen, a Colonel Beauchamp, the husband of the former, and the father of the latter lady.

Mrs. Beauchamp, in any other country than the United States, might still have been considered as young, for she was still remarkably handsome, and wanted three years of forty. Her daughter, a young thing of scarcely seventeen, was as beautiful a girl as it was well possible for the eye to look upon; yet all lovely as she was, it was probable that she would in a year or two be more lovely still; for her graceful form was almost too slight and *élancée* for feminine perfection of outline. But her dark eye already sparkled with intelligence that looked as if the spirit were of greater maturity than the fair shrine it inhabited. She was seated between her father and mother, who seemed to vie with each other in noting everything she did, and everything she said.

Then there were two elderly gentlemen, who soon contrived to make it known to the strangers that they were members of congress; a younger man, by name Horatio Timmsthackle, who hinted at literary occupations; and another younger still, Mr. Washington Tomkins, who seemed the man of fashion, *par excellence*, of the party, for he was more gaily dressed, and gave himself incomparably more airs than any one else. Lastly, there was an Englishman, also a young man; but he gave himself no airs, and was in no way remarkably dressed; but being seated immediately opposite the beautiful Miss Beauchamp, appeared to find more amusement in watching her tricks, than in exhibiting any of his own.

And, in truth, this remarkable young lady afforded him sufficient observation in this way, for her lively mobility equalled her beauty. Whether she ate any dinner at all might have been doubtful at the conclusion of the repast, even to an accurate observer; for it was very difficult to note anything save the expression of her most beauteous face, which recorded a rapid succession of observations on every one present.

For the most part, however, these appeared not to be in the quizzing line, but to be made up of quick remark and a sort of meditative interpretation, which seemed again and again to be the consequence of it. Her dress was as much out of the common way

as herself, being composed of the smooth shining linen-cloth of which children's pinbefores are made; but it was delicately fine, and more of an iron-gray, than of the usual yellowish tint. At the throat and wrists it was relieved by the plain white collar and cuffs which a boy might have worn; but the *corsage*, which was fastened in front by a row of little white sugar-loaf buttons, had, like Rebecca's vest, at the tournament of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, its two or three last buttons unfastened; and where are the pearls, or the diamonds, or the rubies, or the emeralds, which would have struck the eye with such a sense of beauty as did the ivory neck thus displayed? The dress was confined round her slender, but not wasp-like waste, by a neatly-fitted band of the same material of which it was made, and the whole effect was enough to have caused a fashionable dressmaker to hang herself, for it proclaimed, with an eloquence not to be mistaken, that her art was worthless. The dark brown silken hair of the beauty appeared to be all of the same length, and was gathered into one smoothly twisted mass, forming a close rich knot at the back of her beautiful little head. Madame Tornorino was seated at the same side of the table as this Annie Beauchamp, and the young Englishman, notwithstanding his *étude suivie* of the fair American features, threw a glance from time to time upon his young countrywoman; the contrast between them was remarkable, and probably did not escape him.

The conversation at an American dinner-table is never much, but the major contrived to find out that the gentleman next to him, a Colonel Wingrove, and one of the members of congress, was fond of a game of piquet, and that Mr. Washington Tomkins, the young man of fashion who sat opposite, was considered as very rich, played at billiards and *écarté*, was trying to get up a horse-race, and was ready to bet upon anything and everything. So, on the whole, Major Allen Barnaby thought the party agreeable, or at any rate that the party composing it had the power of being so.

Considering the number of persons at table, the repast was over in an incredibly short space of time; and then all the gentlemen starting up, the ladies started up after them, the male part of the society strolling off to sundry coffee-houses, and the ladies returning to the "keeping-room," where they amused themselves by drinking lemonade and making conversation.

The extreme heat of the weather might have induced them to scatter themselves as widely as possible apart, for which species of luxury the ample apartment was well suited, had it not been that the natural curiosity of the sex, as well as of the country, induced the American ladies to gather round Mrs. Allen Barnaby and her party, when, by degrees, all reserve disappeared, and the talk among them flowed as freely as if they had known each other for years. The massive Mrs. Carmichael, indeed, soon ceased to be of the society, for sleep overpowered her, and stretched at full length and breadth upon an enormous sofa, she presently ceased to betray any symptom of animated existence, except heavy snoring.

"You have come over in an unaccountable hot season, ladies," said Mrs. Beauchamp, graciously addressing the whole group. "It will be wonderful luck if you all keep out of the fever, and you all fresh Europeans."

"Is there any catching fever in the town, ma'am?" demanded Miss Louisa Perkins, in a voice of alarm.

"Oh my! what a funny question," returned Mrs. Beauchamp, laughing. "Why in summer and autumn time, New Orleans has always got plenty of fever."

"Dear me! Then I hope the major will not think of staying," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby. "A young married woman like my daughter, Madame Tornorino, should always be extremely careful of her health."

"Oh! I don't mind the fever a farthing," said Patty, gaily. "I'm so glad we've got here, for my husband is so delighted with it!"

"That certainly shows that he is a gentleman of taste," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, "for New Orleans is, past doubt, one of the finest cities in the known world."

"Oh, mother! I wish I could see some of the cities in the unknown world!" exclaimed her daughter.

"What, the European cities, I expect you mean, my dear? Well, more unlikely things have happened than that. An only daughter ma'am—perhaps yours is an only daughter too, and then you will quite understand me when I say, that the only daughter of a gentleman of good standing, very seldom sets her longing upon anything, without having a good chance of getting it."

"Perfectly true, ma'am," returned Mrs. Barnaby, with dignity and feeling. "Madame Tornorino is an only daughter, and I cannot deny that her father's ample fortune has ever anticipated her every wish. So you have fixed your heart upon going to Europe, have you, young lady?"

"I?" said Annie. "Oh no! I have hardly seen anything in my own beautiful land yet."

"I only thought so," returned Mrs. Barnaby, "from what you said about wishing to see the cities of the unknown world, you know."

"Do you call Europe an unknown world?" said Annie, innocently.

"Why, no my dear, certainly not. I did not mean that, of course. But what did *you* mean? Where was it you were wishing to go?"

"I very seldom mean anything, ma'am, when I speak," replied Miss Beauchamp.

"I hope our daughters will become well acquainted," said Mrs. Beauchamp, looking with a good deal of interest at the handsome silks and satins of the English mother and daughter. "Though your young lady is married, I can promise her that she will find our Annie as smart a person as ever she came across in her life. She is quite famed throughout the Union, already."

"Smart?" again muttered the puzzled Patty, fixing her eyes on Annie's brown-holland dress.

But notwithstanding the utter contempt which she felt for her claims to smartness, she was too sociably disposed to neglect this offered opportunity of improving her acquaintance with a native, and drawing a chair close to the sofa on which the young American was seated, she began what she intended should be a very intimate conversation.

"I day say you will be full of envy about my being married, won't you? But that must not prevent our being capital good friends. I dare say you will be married soon. How old are you?"

"I think mamma can tell you better than I can," replied Miss Beauchamp. "I have an exceedingly bad memory."

"How very odd!" cried Patty, staring at her. "Not know how old you are? Why, if you was not so young and so pretty," she added, lowering her voice, "that is, if you were like my dear friend there, Miss Matilda Perkins, I should understand it. She is always making mistakes about what age she is. But that is all very natural, isn't it?"

And Patty looked at her poor friend Matilda, and laughed. But Annie neither looked, laughed, nor answered, but sat immovably still, looking as much like a fool as she could possibly contrive to do. Poor Matilda, meanwhile, who felt that her American campaign could not possibly begin till she had made some acquaintance with the natives, was receiving, with the most pleased and zealous attention, some little initiatory civilities from Mrs. Grimes and Mrs. Hucks.

"You are direct from London, I expect, ma'am?" said Mrs. Grimes.

"Yes, from London, direct, ma'am," responded Miss Matilda, delighted with the opportunity thus afforded her of putting the stamp of fashion upon everything she did, and everything she wore.

"I wish to goodness you had come direct from Paris instead!" said Mrs. Hucks. "I expect you know, ma'am, that the people of fashion in the Union, from Maine to Georgia, I may say, don't lay any great stress upon the fashion of London. We calculate that we have long ago given the go-by to that old city. But Paris is something. We are all ready and willing to knock under there, in the article of taste and the fine arts, such as millinery, dressmaking, and the like. We count that England is worn out altogether in that respect, which is the reason, I expect, why folks call it the old country."

This was a terrible blow to poor Matilda; nevertheless her spirits rallied again, as she recollected how very much nearer Paris was to London than New Orleans, and much more anxious to conciliate than to triumph, she gently replied, "That is just what we all say ourselves. We all consider everything in London as exceed-

ingly old-fashioned, excepting just what is brought over to us fresh from Paris, which happens very often, you know, because of the two places being so near."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby, who had overheard the latter part of this conversation, here volunteered her valuable assistance to Miss Matilda, and feeling quite as desirous of being considered as an arrival of fashionable importance as her friend could be, with a vastly bolder spirit whereby to defend her claim, she speedily took the business very effectively into her own hands.

"Nothing can be more correct, ma'am, than your observation respecting the London fashions," said she. "I am sure one might think you were just come from Europe to hear you, for all you say is exactly as if a London lady was saying it. But of course you know, ma'am, how we manage about these matters? When I say *we*, I mean to be understood as speaking of people of first-rate importance and fashion, who have been introduced at court, you know, and all that; for the common middling kind of gentry really know very little about the matter, and are as well contented when they put their vulgar stupid heads into a London-made bonnet, as if it had been brought express from Paris. But we, of the upper classes, cannot endure anything of the kind. Couriers arrive in London from Paris four times in every day, for no other purpose in the world than just to bring over bonnets and dresses. You cannot think what a pretty sight it is, just after one of these spring vans has arrived, to see the unpacking of the cases in the rooms of the fashionable milliners! I really do not know anything so elegant and so interesting! No ladies, however, who have not been presented at court, are ever permitted to be present on these occasions. It was absolutely necessary, you know, to make some arrangement and regulation of this kind, or the milliners' rooms would have been filled with a perfect mob. But since this has been finally settled, nothing can be more elegant than the company one meets on these occasions."

"Really! Well now, that does seem to be a very queer idea, to be sure, let who will have invented it!" said Mrs. Beauchamp, with a little air of disdain. "But pray, ma'am, are gentlemen ever admitted?"

"Certainly they are," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby with dignity. "Such, I mean, as have been presented at court."

"Oh! then Mr. Robert Owen goes to see the caps and bonnets, I expect," said Annie Beauchamp, innocently.

"If he is a man of fashion, I dare say he does," answered the not-too-well-informed Mrs. Allen Barnaby.

The young lady did not reply, but closed her eyes as if disposed to sleep. The conversation, however, proceeded between the other ladies, who all, with the exception of Miss Louisa, seemed anxious to hear what further Mrs. Allen Barnaby would say, and Mrs. Beauchamp answer.

"It was but a day or two before we quitted London," said the

former lady, "that we paid our compliments for the last time this season to her Majesty Queen Victoria, and a sweet, pretty, amiable creature she is, I assure you. It is a great advantage, ma'am, especially where one has a young daughter to bring out, to have the privilege of going to court. There is nothing in the whole world will stand in the place of that—positively nothing."

"I will tell you what, my good lady," returned Mrs. Beauchamp, her handsome eyes looking rather fierce, and her complexion considerably heightened—"I will tell you one thing out of pure cleverness and good nature. I expect you won't find it answer coming over American ladies with long stories about going to court, because it is the very thing of all creation that we most hate, despise, and abominate. You can't, I expect, though you do come from the old country, you can't be so unaccountable ignorant as not to know that a court is a thing we would no more permit in this country than we would the putting of poison into our bread; that the very name of it turns us sick, and that all the unfortunate people, that God, in one of his mysteries, permits still to be the pitifling victims of such unnatural and degrading oppression, ought never to mention such a thing in the presence of a free citizen, any more than they would any other disgraceful or indecent misfortune that unhappily belonged to them."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby was so completely thunderstruck and overpowered by this unexpected burst of eloquence, that almost for the first time in her life she felt unable to answer a word. It is probable that Mrs. Beauchamp, who, excepting when her patriotic feelings (upon which she particularly prided herself) were touched, was really a very amiable woman—it is highly probable that she not only saw, but lamented the very violent effect she had produced. She would have scorned and hated herself had she, upon hearing a person actually boast of having been at a court (without being forced to go there by political necessity, like the American ministers)—she would have scorned, hated, and belittled herself for ever, had she heard this without raising the hallowed voice of freedom to express her sense of its baseness. But she did not the least in the world wish to be otherwise than exceedingly polite and genteel in her demeanour to Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and all other European ladies. Such were now her secret feelings as she watched the perturbed and puzzled countenance of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and had she known them, she would very likely have parodied against herself the famous lines—

Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,
But why did you kick me down stairs?

Under the influence of feelings such as these, Mrs. Beauchamp determined to make it manifest to the strangers, that a perfect "American female" could be as much celebrated and distinguished for her politeness and her literature, as for her patriotism and political superiority. With this view, she at once changed her

heroic tone for one of familiar kindness, and said, "I must not let you, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and these other ladies, who have come such a curious long way to see our western wonder of the world—I must not let you all fancy that the patriotic warmth of our free notions blinds us to all those accomplishments as have nothing to do with the government. It is quite the contrary, I assure you, and I expect that you'll realise this fact before you have been long in the country. The great point of all with us is your literature, you know, which we make a most particular principle of studying. And that, to our honour be it spoken, even now, when we are quite availed of the fact that we have for some months past, by our native productions, gone far beyond anything that ever was printed or written in the old world. But this, of course, can't touch any of us in the manner of a surprise, because all philosophical people know that a soil that is close worked up and worn out, can't be expected to produce things as fine and flourishing as new soil. There is nobody, I expect, that will venture to contradict that, now-a-days. But never a bit the less for that, we are still ready to extend the hand of patronage to European talent. And, I'll tell you what, ladies, there is still, notwithstanding the terrible great advance which our authors have lately made before the English, there is still one way in which an English gentlemen, or lady either, might put everybody of all countries in the world behind them in the point of fame; and that is by writing an out-and-out good book of travels upon the United States. I calculate that there is nobody bold enough to deny that it is the finest subject in the world, and so it would have been, no doubt of it, if nobody had ever put pen to paper about it. But when one thinks of all the lies that have got to be contradicted, one must be a fool not to see that such a book might be made as would render the author's name as glorious throughout the Union as that of General Lafayette himself. And as to dollars! Oh, my! There would be no end to the dollars as would be made by it."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby, through all the various changes and chances of her life, must ever have appeared to the reader what she really was—namely, a woman of very extraordinary acuteness. Though in general, perhaps, more of a talker than a listener, she felt as she now listened to Mrs. Beauchamp, that at the present moment much more was to be gained by acquiring than by giving information; and when her first dismay, occasioned by Mrs. Beauchamp's patriotic outbreak, had subsided, she gave her earnest and undivided attention to every syllable she uttered.

It must elevate the characters of both Major Allen Barnaby and his lady in the mind of my readers, when they are told that they were at this period of their lives on much more confidential terms together than at any former time since their union.

Both these excellent persons had their peculiarities, and though on many points it was quite impossible that any two people could assimilate better, there were others respecting which the major had

felt when they first married, that they might not perhaps, from the difference of their previous habits of life, hold precisely the same opinions. Under this impression he had, in many cases, entirely concealed some little circumstances which he thought might possibly startle his lady, and so managed others, as gently to bring before her eyes whatever he wished should become familiar to them, and thus by degrees, had gradually led her to a degree of independent thinking on most subjects, hardly inferior to his own—so that now he had really scarcely a thought that he concealed from her, and she was quite as well aware that his position was at this time a little critical as he could be himself. It was doubtless for this reason that she now listened to Mrs. Beauchamp with such deep attention. The major had given her very clearly to understand, that their well-doing for the future depended altogether upon their being able to establish themselves in the esteem and good-liking of the inhabitants of the land in which they had in fact taken refuge, from a good deal that might have made it difficult for them to find an agreeable abode elsewhere. Every word that her new acquaintance uttered, therefore, seemed to be big with important meaning, and before she had ceased to speak, an effect had been produced on the mind of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, which as she afterwards said, in communicating it to the major, was likely to have an influence on the whole of her future life.

When deep impressions are made upon the soul, it often appears, for a time, as if the effect produced were working so strongly within as to prevent any portion of the result from being left visible without. And so it was on the present occasion with Mrs. Allen Barnaby. Neither Mrs. Beauchamp herself, nor any other person present, were in the least degree aware of what was going on in the secret recesses of her mind. Nevertheless, she had sufficient command of herself to retain the appearance of being perfectly present to everything that was passing. When Mrs. Grimes remarked to her that “there was no country in the world that enjoyed the luxury of iced water in the same elegant manner as New Orleans,” she bowed and smiled exactly with a proper degree of acquiescence; and when Mrs. Hucks, holding out her foot for inspection, said that she supposed the ladies had heard that American females were famous for their beauty in that particular part of the person, any one in the world who had seen her, might have supposed that she knew what had been said. But, in point of fact, she had not the slightest idea what the observation meant, yet with a sort of instinctive cleverness made a little action with her hand towards Miss Matilda Perkins, who was sitting near her, as if to refer the matter to her, from thinking her a person peculiarly well calculated to discuss it. This instantly carried the attention of every American lady present, except the sleeping Annie, towards Miss Matilda; and as that graceful young lady was blessed by having a long slender foot, which might have defied the toes of nine-tenths of her female fellow-creatures to get into her shoe,

though there was "stuff enough" in one of her long slippers to make a pair for many, it answered very well, as it brought on a long discussion upon long feet and short feet, and broad feet and narrow feet, and round feet and square feet—all of which sheltered the reverie of Mrs. Allen Barnaby from observation, and enabled her very satisfactorily to arrange her thoughts before she was called upon by Mrs. Carmichael to decide whether she would take coffee or tea.

By that time she had sufficiently recovered her usual state of mind to be aware that of all the party which had dined together, her own set and the portly lady of the mansion were all that remained in the saloon, and it was not without a sensation of envy that she learned they were all gone to various evening parties, of which a vast number were nightly given in the town. The only gentleman who reappeared was the young Englishman, Mr. Egerton; but having looked round the large half-lighted room in search of some one whom, as it appeared, he did not find, he rambled into the moonlit balcony for a few minutes, then passed through the saloon again, and disappeared.

Dulness seemed now to settle heavily upon the party. Mrs. Carmichael, after subjecting Miss Matilda Perkins, who chanced to be the one seated next her, to the usual transatlantic process of interrogation, as to everything about her goings and doings, past and future, did not appear to consider herself obliged to do the honours of her mansion any further; and having caused a female slave to bring in a large square of light-green gauze, and so to arrange it round her head, neck, and arms as to protect her from the attacks of mosquitoes, she deliberately prepared herself for sleep.

Had Mrs. Allen Barnaby, therefore, been at that moment inclined for conversation (which she certainly was not), she would not have indulged in it; her fixed and steadfast resolution to conciliate every man, woman, and child in the Union, being quite sufficient to prevent her running the risk of keeping any of them awake when they wished to sleep; so she quietly prepared herself to follow her gigantic hostess's example. But she soon found that there were two causes which would render this impossible. The first and most important was the absence of the green gauze—for no sooner had she lain herself in an attitude of rest, than a sharp threatening buzz became audible around her; and in the next, that irritating paroxysm of feverish unrest supervened, which none can conceive or comprehend who have not been exposed to the torment. The second cause of prevention to her desired repose was the voice of her daughter, who now began, in accents less soft than those of the forsaken wood-pigeon, first to deplore the cruel absence of her lord, and then to predict how he should be treated when she got him again.

So Mrs. Allen Barnaby reared herself up again, and, looking round her, conceived the very rational idea that, let the hour be what it might, the best thing they could do would be to go to bed;

for the eldest Miss Perkins was looking so pale, so woe-begone, that a heart of stone might have felt an interest in getting her deposited where there was the best chance of her forgetting all the thoughts and all the feelings that now seemed to have hold of her; while the youngest, "her hopes all flat," had much the aspect of a ghost who waits to be spoken to before he avows his purpose. And as to Patty, she was bemoaning herself so piteously, that it was evidently much better she should be alone than in company.

"What do you say, my dears, to our all going to bed?" said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, rising from her recumbent posture, and shaking the envenomed host that tormented her from her person. "There is no good in our waiting for the men, for I know of old, Patty, dear, that when they once get roaming about a new place, it is not a short time that will bring them back again."

The two Miss Perkinses rose instantly, and might, perhaps, have looked comforted, could the features of either at that moment have taken suddenly so agreeable an expression; but Patty's reply to the question was almost a scream, from the tone in which she uttered—

"What! before Tornorino comes back? What a brute you must be, mamma, to think of such a thing!"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby, however, admirable mother as she was, seldom made up her mind to do one thing, because she liked it best herself, and then did something else because her daughter liked it better; and now, therefore, proceeding to a small table in a corner of the room, on which stood several night-lamps, she took one, saying, "Very well, my dear, you will do as you like. Just ring the bell, Louisa—will you? I can't do without having the black woman to show me the way."

Patty pulled out her pocket-handkerchief, and actually began to sob; but the black woman appeared, her mother and "the dear Perkinses" began to move, and Patty rose and followed them, scolding her mother, though, all the time very heartily. How soon the various individuals of the party found consolation for their different sorrows in sleep, is not easily known; but Mrs. Allen Barnaby, whose career it is the historian's especial business to follow, was soon snugly and contentedly ensconced within her mosquito-net, and though she had too much to say to her husband not to wish for his presence, she nevertheless would not allow herself to regret his absence, knowing too well the nature of the city he had selected for his residence, not to feel thoroughly persuaded that, stranger as he was, he must be nevertheless already well employed. And as she nestled her head on her pillow, she muttered, without intending any quotation, "He is about it."

CHAPTER IX.

It was nearly two hours past midnight when Major Allen Barnaby mounted very quietly to his chamber, yet not so noiselessly, either, as to avoid waking his wife. The thoughts she wished to communicate to him, however, were both too important and too voluminous to be opened upon at such an hour, and nearly all the words which passed between them were—on her side, “Well, Donny, have you done anything?” and on his, “Yes, pretty well; but I am devilish tired. You shall hear more to-morrow. Good night.”

The morrow came, and found them both in the best possible humour for conjugal confidence. As soon as the fact of their both being wide awake was mutually ascertained, Mrs. Allen Barnaby resumed the questioning of the preceding night by saying, “Well, dear, and *what* did you do?”

“Why, tolerably well for just the first setting off, and Tornorino is a much better hand than Foxcroft. I am devilish glad I refused to bring that fellow—he is so confounded clumsy, he can’t give one a look without staring one full in the face. But Patty’s Don is quite another style of aide-de-camp; though he generally looks, you know, as if he were half asleep, I promise you I found him perfectly wide awake. So much so, indeed, that I asked him how it happened that we found him so confoundedly poor, and why he had never tried the sort of thing before?”

“And what did he say, major?” demanded his wife, rather eagerly.

“He answered, with the most perfect frankness, that he had never had capital enough since he left Spain to attempt the sort of thing at all in the style of a gentleman. I really like the young fellow exceedingly.”

“I am monstrous glad to hear it,” replied his wife, “for Patty perfectly dotes upon him. So that’s all as it should be. But now, my dear, do tell me a little about the style in which you find they do things here? Do you think it will suit you, Donny? Do you think you will find it answer?”

“Answer?” repeated the major, significantly. “I dare say enough may be done to repay time and trouble; but, if by *answer* you mean anything like the glorious opportunities one had in London in the way we were going on, I must certainly say no. Nothing at all approaching even the sum that fool Ronaldson had in his pocket-book is ever likely to be got by one job, I’ll venture to say, without a word about the checks he was willing enough to have given if that confounded jade had not stopped him. No, nothing of this magnitude, my Barnaby—nothing *near* it can ever be hoped for. But we must make the best of it now, my dear, and do as well as we can. You know now, wife, the real state of

my purse, which I did not think it right to mention as long as you were so mad about dressing up Patty to get her married. But that's all over now, and I am willing to make you acquainted with everything. I don't think I am a man likely to *lose* money, even here, but devilish sharp they are, I promise you, and I could no more do single-handed than I could fly. It is a great piece of good luck my having Tornorino. And you will have your part to play too, my Barnaby, for it's plain to see that the *first-raters*, the planters, and such like from the south, who are sporting men, and come to New Orleans for a few weeks' lark, won't sit down with the first that comes by—not they—I saw that plain enough, and your post must be to make a large acquaintance, and keep up a good appearance and make yourself as popular as you can."

"As popular as I can," repeated Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a long deep breath that seemed necessary to relieve the overpowering fulness of her heart. "What shall you say, Major Allen Barnaby, if I have already been put upon a scent, and devised a scheme that shall not only insure our popularity, but bring us in lots of dollars besides; what should you say to that?"

"Why, I should say that my Barnaby was a jewel," replied the major, with an eager expression of satisfaction, which showed him by no means disposed to doubt her boasted discovery; for, to say truth, he had really great confidence in the excellence of her understanding, which he had for many years been in the habit of watching, and always with increasing admiration. "But make haste, and tell me," he added, "for, as you may imagine, I am pretty eager to understand you."

"I will be as explicit as possible, my dear love," replied the lady, with a little dignity of manner, which well became her at that moment; "but you must be patient with me, or I shall not have the happiness of making you understand me. The thing I am about to propose is so perfectly new to us both, that at the first contemplation of it I feel it possible that you may testify more surprise than pleasure—more diffidence than hope. But hear all I have to say, and I think the final result will be different."

"You doubtless observed at table yesterday that very handsome woman, Mrs. Beauchamp; she is the wife, you know, of Colonel Beauchamp, and from all I can gather from what has been dropped by Mrs. Carmichael and the other ladies, the Beauchamps are people of quite first-rate consequence, not only here, but at Washington, and New York, and Charlestown, and indeed everywhere. Well, I last night had a great deal of most interesting conversation with her, both about Europe and America. It is quite evident that she is a woman of a very superior mind, and her feelings of patriotic love and admiration for her own country are something so sublime, that she almost frightened me. Now, it is as plain as the sun at noon-day, Donny, that it won't do playing the same game here that we did at Sydney. What I mean is, that it won't do for us to be boasting of our high family and con-

nections in the old country ; for it was easy to see that she despised everything in England, even the Queen herself, just as if it was all so much dirt under her feet. But after she made this clear enough for the dullest to understand, she told me that nevertheless there was one set among the English that was still very much considered in the United States, and that was the authors."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby here paused for a moment in her speech, in order to discover, either from the looks or words of her husband, whether any of those ideas suggested themselves to him which swelled her own heart almost to bursting. But no! nothing seemed to occur to the major, but that he must listen further, in order to comprehend what his lady was talking about. She slightly sighed, and then went on.

"Well, my dear major, Mrs. Beauchamp then proceeded to say, that there *was* a book which might be written by one of the old country, which, if composed in a proper spirit, would make the name of the author as popular throughout the Union as that of General Lafayette himself, and bring in such a flood of wealth to the author as had never before been realised by any literary publication whatever. This book must be 'Travels through the United States of America.'"

"I should have thought there had been enough of these written already," said the major, coldly.

"That is precisely the reason why another is wanted," replied his wife, eagerly ; "for Mrs. Beauchamp declares that there has never yet been a single volume written upon the United States that was not crammed with the most abominable lies from beginning to end, and, as she most justly observes, anybody who would come forward to contradict all these wicked and most scandalous falsehoods, would be rewarded in the very noblest manner possible, first, by a great quantity of money, and, next, by the admiration and respect of all the people in the country."

"But how can all this affect us, my dear?" demanded the provoking major, with the most innocent air in the world. "I do assure you, wife, that my writing a book is a thing altogether out of the question. I am quite certain that I have no capacity for it."

"But I, on my part, am by no means prepared to say so much for myself, Major Allen Barnaby," returned his wife, with some little asperity ; "on the contrary, you must excuse whatever appearance of presumption you may possibly find in it ; but I must, in justice to myself, declare that I feel conscious of the power and the talent necessary to the undertaking. You will not, I trust, oppose it."

"Oppose it! No, certainly, my dear, I shall not oppose it ; why should I? It can do neither of us any harm, at any rate. You have my free leave to begin your book whenever you like, and I am sure I heartily wish you success with it."

Although the major pronounced this speech in a manner some-

what too jocose for the matter of it, his wife took it in very good part, declaring herself perfectly satisfied, and declaring also that she should lose no time in beginning her interesting and very important task.

"I shall of course," she added, "greatly want some competent person to assist me with information on many points wherein it will be impossible for me immediately to obtain it myself! but what I hope and trust to, is, that I shall be able to form a close intimacy with that charming woman, Mrs. Beauchamp; and you, my dearest major, must help me to obtain this object. I know nobody in the world so capable of putting a thing in a good light as you are, when you have a mind to do it. You know what I mean, my dear Donny—a little embellishment, and the least bit in the world of invention, will make everything easy to me. All I want you to do is just to say to Mrs. Beauchamp, in your clever, easy way, that I have been rather celebrated in my own country as an author, but that hitherto, from modesty, I have always published under a feigned name. And then, you know, if you like it, you may just hint at any one particular author you please, saying enough to put her upon the scent, but without committing yourself by absolutely pronouncing any particular name."

"Yes, certainly, I could do that," answered the major, "if you thought it would do any good."

"Good? Trust me, Donny, it would do all the good in the world; and if you will only help me so far, you shall see that I know how to help myself too. I'll take care, major, not to disgrace whatever you may take it into your head to say of me."

"Very well, my dear, then you have only to tell me in what direction my hints are to go. I shall not like to begin till I am quite sure of putting you and your side-saddle upon the right horse. Who, of all the lady-writers, would you best like to be taken for?"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby mused for a moment or two before she replied, and then said—

"Mrs. Hemings, I am afraid, is dead; isn't she?"

"Yes, my dear, she is," said the major.

"And Miss Austin? What's become of Miss Austin?"

"I am afraid she is dead, too, my Barnaby," said he.

"Dear me, how provoking!" returned the lady; "but it does not signify, there are lots more. Let us see—there is Miss Edgeworth."

"But you know, my dear, she has never been married. How should we manage about Patty? It will be downright scandal to make out that our Patty is the child of an unmarried lady," said the conscientious Major Allen Barnaby.

"Then I don't care a straw who it is," returned his wife. "You must make out I am somebody famous, and that will do."

"Very well, my dear. I really think I do understand you

now perfectly ; and you are such a devilish clever woman, that I dare say, somehow or other, you will make the scheme answer. I'll do my best, at any rate, to help you. But hark!—there is the thundering breakfast-bell ! Now watch me, and see if I don't set about my part of the job without losing time."

CHAPTER X.

AT ten o'clock, or thereabouts, the comfortable inmates, that is to say, the white inmates of Mrs. Carmichael's establishment, usually met for breakfast. Most of them obeyed the summons of the great bell on this occasion simultaneously, entering the room almost at the same moment, and were proceeding to take their places at the table in the same order as at the dinner of yesterday, when Major Allen Barnaby, with that sort of easy good humour which all lands find it so difficult to resist, turned from the place he had before occupied beside his lady, and dropping into the chair next Mrs. Beauchamp, said—

"It is too cruel, ladies and gentlemen, to condemn a poor Englishman, who has crossed the Atlantic expressly for the purpose of making acquaintance with persons whose national character he considers as the first in the world, it will be much too cruel if you insist upon all our party sitting together, so that we can speak to none other. Shall I be forgiven if I break through the established order of things, and, begging Mr. Washington Tomkins to take my seat beside Mrs. Allen Barnaby, venture to place myself next the lady of Colonel Beauchamp?"

It is probable, by the smile and the bow which were exchanged, as this was said, between the colonel and the major, that some progress towards acquaintance had been made between them during the rambling of the preceding evening ; at any rate, the overture was well received. Mrs. Beauchamp smiled very graciously upon the major as he took his seat, and the elegant Mr. Washington Tomkins muttered something about "vastly happy," as he looked full in the face of the beautiful Annie, and sat down in the chair opposite to her.

Major Allen Barnaby, doubtless, flattered himself that the chit-chat of a breakfast-table would give him the opportunity he wanted of communicating a little information respecting the high literary reputation of his wife, and it is probable that the massive appearance of the viands on the table, suggesting the necessity of length of time for their consumption, might have made him feel sure of having ample time before him for that purpose.

But in this he deceived himself altogether ; beefsteaks of an inch and a half in thickness disappeared, it was impossible to guess how, with the rapidity of an *omelette soufflée* ; coffee, as hot as Mrs. Carmichael could make it, was poured down the uninjured throats

of the Louisianian ladies and gentlemen, with the impunity of cooling sherbet, and enormous platters of scalding hot bread vanished with a celerity that really suggested the idea of magic.

In short, every American lady and gentleman had breakfasted, and very sufficiently, before Major Allen Barnaby had done more towards leading the conversation to the point he aimed at, than saying that he hoped Mrs. Allen Barnaby would be fortunate enough to make an acquaintance of some intimacy with the lady he had the happiness of addressing, as it was highly essential to the particular objects she had in view, that she should know and be known to the most distinguished persons in the Union.

Mrs. Beauchamp seemed by no means displeased at this. She bowed and she smiled; but before it was possible she could speak, all the gentlemen of the party rose, and all the ladies immediately followed their example, and rose after them. The breakfast was over, and the heavily-laden table cleared.

Major Allen Barnaby was startled, but not defeated. He spoke of the luxury of Mrs. Carmichael's large, cool saloon, and said he hoped the ladies did not entirely forsake it in the mornings.

"Why, it isn't very often, I expect, that you'll find American ladies there, major, unless they are just quite literary people, who give up everything for the sake of conversing with gentlemen about books; I don't calculate that, except these, you'll often find American ladies out of their own chambers in a morning anywhere."

"Then I trust that you and your charming daughter are altogether devoted to literature?" he replied. "You will, indeed, in that case find a most suitable and truly congenial companion in Mrs. Allen Barnaby. She has never yet published anything under her own name but ——"

Here all the party having begun to move off, Mrs. Beauchamp felt obliged to move off too; which the major perceiving, again expressed his hope that she and her daughter, who had now taken her arm, were going to the saloon.

"Well, I don't care if I do take a spell in the keeping-room this morning," she replied; her curiosity being in truth as vividly awakened as Major Allen Barnaby himself could desire by the words he had spoken.

They therefore moved on together, and the balcony with its fine orange-trees being now in perfect shade, the attentive major led the way into it, and was presently happy enough to find himself seated on a bench with the charming Mrs. Beauchamp.

"As yet," he immediately resumed, "Mrs. Allen Barnaby has never published any work with her own name; but *entre nous*, and as a very great secret, I will whisper in your ear that she does not mean always to go on in that way; and in fact, for I see no reason why I should not confess it to a lady so evidently of superior mind as you are,—in fact, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, our chief object in now visiting your glorious country is to give her an oppor-

tunity of writing her remarks upon it. You have no idea how admirable her style is, and in just appreciation of character I will venture to say that she has no equal. If she succeeds in this undertaking, as I fully hope and expect she will do, I have told her plainly that I will not permit her any longer to conceal her name. You must not think me a tyrant, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, because I speak thus authoritatively; but like all persons of genius, Mrs. Allen Barnaby appreciates her own talents with a degree of modesty that is absolutely absurd; and really, in my opinion, it has become a duty, for the sake of her daughter, and the noble Spanish family with whom we have been so happy as to ally ourselves, that a fame so richly earned, should not be thrown away upon a supposititious name. Do you not agree with me? Do you not think I am right?"

"Indeed, and indeed, I do, sir!" replied the greatly excited Mrs. Beauchamp; "but may I just ask you the favour of telling me under what name your lady has hitherto published?"

Major Allen Barnaby looked in the lady's handsome face with a very intelligent smile, and raising his fore-finger to the side of his nose, said—

"There are some things, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, that I *dare* not do; but I will tell you one thing for your satisfaction, that if you shall be induced to bestow as much of your valuable friendship upon my admirable wife, as I am inclined to flatter myself you will do, I will venture to say that you will not be long before you discover her secret. Her manner of thinking, her manner of speaking, will be sure to betray her—and I will not deny that I shall be heartily glad of it; for in this distinguished country, at any rate, she will then enjoy the possession of the fame which she had so wantonly sported with, and I may say, thrown away in Europe. Yes, Mrs. Beauchamp, though I know she would quarrel with me for saying so, I really shall be delighted if you find her out."

"And so, I guess, shall I be too!" returned Mrs. Beauchamp, with great animation. "Oh! it would be first-rate delightful to turn round some day, smack upon her, and call her by her false name. I *shall* enjoy it to be sure! And you must not refuse, major, to give me a little token, now and then, if you see I am in the right way, and cry 'Burn!' as the children do when they are playing hide-and-seek."

"As much as I can venture to do so without getting into a scrape, I certainly will," he replied; "for, depend upon it, I shall enjoy the joke as much as you will. And may I then hope, my dear madam, that now you are aware what Mrs. Allen Barnaby's object is in coming to this country, you will extend a helping hand to her, and by giving her the assistance of native information (without which it is absolutely impossible that such a work can be satisfactorily produced) enable her at once to do justice to her own talents, and to the magnificent subject she has undertaken."

"There is nothing in all creation, sir, that I should so much like

to do," eagerly returned Mrs. Beauchamp. "All the women in the Union—the white women, of course, I mean—are counted good patriots; indeed, they are pretty considerable famous for it; but I expect that you won't light upon one from Maine to Georgia, as out-tops me in that respect; and what my mind has undergone in the way of rage at all the horrible, scandalous, lying books, as have been spit out by the envy of the old country against us, is a great deal more than I will choose to describe. But it is quite droll to think what I said to your lady last evening, major; why she must have thought I was a witch to be sure!"

"What did you say to her, madam?" demanded he, with every appearance of eager curiosity.

"What, then," said Mrs. Beauchamp, "she never mentioned to you—she never told you, that I had been talking exactly of such a book as what you have now been speaking of, and saying what an outrageous beautiful success it was sure to have in the Union, if it was but written with decent attention to truth, and such a conformity to the merits of the country as the in-dwellers in it, who everybody must allow are the only proper judges, would be likely to approve? Did not your lady say anything about this, major?"

"No, not a word," he replied.

"Dear me, how very odd!"

"Not the least odd in the world, my dear lady," he replied, "as you would be ready to allow, did you know Mrs. Allen Barnaby better. She has so much delicate reserve about her on every point at all relative to her literary pursuits, that I am persuaded *nothing* could have prevailed upon her to touch upon the subject."

"My! How unaccountably remarkable that a lady of such first-rate smart talents should be so uncommon shy about it! But it seems to me, sir, as if what you was so kind as to mention just now, could never come to pass, I mean as regarding any use I might be of about making her take the right view of things. How will she ever be able to abide my telling her that I know what she is about?" demanded the anxious female patriot.

"Your question, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, enables me, while I reply to it, to give you another characteristic trait of my admirable wife—you must forgive my calling her so. The fact is, that exactly in proportion as she avoids all allusion to her own great literary success with all who are incapable of assisting her efforts, she sedulously cultivates every possible opportunity of entering into discussion with those whom she imagines can give her any species of information on the themes about which she is engaged. Doubt not, therefore, that if you will have the excessive kindness to give her the advantage of your knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, she will not only enter with you on the subject with the most open-hearted frankness, but will listen to every word you utter with equal respect and gratitude; and thus, my dearest lady, you will be the means of at length sending into the world such a

work upon the United States of America as may safely be depended on as authentic."

"Then I wish I may be flogged like a nigger if I don't devote myself to the business, body and soul!" replied Mrs. Beauchamp, her whole countenance kindling with patriotic energy. "Mrs. Allen Barnaby has nothing to do, but just to say when she wants me, and I'll be ready to give up all the frolics in creation, rather than not be ready to go to her. Yes, major, please Heaven, the Stars and the Stripes shall have justice done to them at last! Let your lady only do as you say, and mind me, and all that I have got to tell her, and if her book don't prove to her worth a precious deal more than its weight in gold, then say that I am a false-hearted woman, and send me to the Penitentiary."

Major Allen Barnaby felt that if he talked all day he could add nothing to the impression he had already made; he therefore rose, and took a most respectful leave, saying that he should immediately announce to his fortunate wife the happiness that awaited her.

While this conversation had been going on at one end of the long balcony, a *tête-à-tête* equally exclusive was proceeding at the other. Annie Beauchamp, who had taken her mother's arm as they left the breakfast-room, retained it till they reached the balcony: but there she dropped it, because Mrs. Beauchamp walked towards a seat which had no orange-tree in full flower near it; and therefore the young lady turned her steps the other way, and seated herself where one of those fragrant shrubs was in the greatest Malaprop perfection. *Perhaps*, Major Allen Barnaby's being at her mother's side, might have made this movement rather more decided than it would have been without it; for Annie, too, was a patriot, and though a kind-hearted and sweet-tempered girl in other respects, certainly nourished, ay, and carefully nourished, too, a pretty considerable strong prejudice and dislike, not only to the whole English nation in general, but to each and all of the unfortunate individuals from that country with whom she had ever made acquaintance. In fact, if a stranger were presented to her, it was enough for Annie to know that he was an Englishman, in order to set all her faculties to work, in order "to read him backwards."

If such a one, enchanted by her very uncommon beauty, inadvertently permitted his eye to rest for a moment on her lovely face, "he was the most ill-bred and impertinent of men." Did an English traveller venture to mention any beauty, either of nature or of art, that he had left behind him, she would exclaim to her neighbour—

"Only listen to him! Can you conceive any thing more absurd and insufferable? Instead of employing his time in examining our glorious and unequalled country, there he sits, you see, talking of his own! Poor, paltry, miserable, little atom of an island as it is!"

If her beautiful eyes beheld a tall Englishman, "he looked like the mast of a ship"—if a short one encountered the same doubtful blessing, "he was a caricature of Tom Thumb"—if gracious and

graceful as the Apollo, she was "convinced he must be a dancing-master;" and if his conversation betrayed any traces of learning, she would exclaim to her nearest friend—

"Oh! for mercy's sake take me out of hearing of that odious schoolmaster. I am as certain as that I live that he comes from one of those hateful abysses of superstition and slavery that they call Oxford and Cambridge!—the very sight of him makes me ill!"

Such being the state of her feelings, it was not very surprising that she preferred her favourite orange-tree to being seated near Major Allen Barnaby.

But if Annie's chief motive for the preference, was simply getting out of the way of an Englishman, she was unlucky; for scarcely had she placed herself at her ease, with a little *tabouret* for her pretty feet, and a cushion for her elbow to rest upon, than Mr. Egerton, not only an Englishman, but a Cantab to boot, had the audacity to approach her. Now, to say the truth, Mr. Egerton, notwithstanding talents of a very high order, excellent principles, and a heart replete with a multitude of amiable qualities, was fully as much under the influence of prejudice as Annie Beauchamp herself.

In common with a multitude of young Englishmen, whose ripening faculties during the last ten years have enabled them to look on upon the perilous political drama which has been performing, with clear judgment, and views unobscured by early preconceptions of any kind, Mr. Egerton, in common with a vast majority of these sages of his own age, felt too deep-rooted a reverence for the monarchical institutions of his own country, to tolerate the antagonist principles so loudly vaunted throughout the United States of America. Moreover, he was deeply convinced of the political, as well as of the religious necessity of an established faith, for the perfect working of the social contract which binds men together under one government. Moreover, again, the system of slavery was abhorrent to every feeling and faculty of his head, heart, and soul. Moreover, again, he was greatly disposed to misdoubt the honesty—public and individual—of any country where bankruptcy—public and individual—was a matter of constant recurrence and constant indifference. Moreover, again, he exceedingly disliked listening to the human voice, when it came to him through the nose of the speaker; and finally, approved no dialect of English, but that which was held to be the standard language of his native land.

With all these, so "strong against the deed," it may seem strange that the young man, after having well-nigh satiated himself with travel, through pretty nearly every country in Europe, should have taken it into his head to cross the Atlantic in order to visit the land he did *not* love, instead of enjoying the noble fortune and beautiful residence which he had inherited in that which he did.

But the wisest and best among us have their whims, and this expedition of Egerton's must, I suppose, be reckoned among them.

The immediately propelling cause, however, of his setting off, arose at a dinner-party, where he met with a pretty-considerably-famous American author, who not content with entertaining the company by a good set speech of half an hour long, in praise of the glorious and immortal institutions of his own country—slavery and all—concluded it (not being in one of his best humours that day, on account of an English duke having entered the dining-room before him) by rather a savage attack on the inglorious and perishable ones of this.

Mr. Egerton ventured to make an observation or two on the opposite side ; but the American celebrity cut him short, by saying,

“I beg your pardon, sir, if I can't count your opinion as any way suitable to stand against mine ; and my reason is this ;—you have seen only one of the two countries you are comparing together, and I have seen both, and I leave it to any man to say which has the best right to be listened to.”

“I submit, sir, to the force of your argument,” replied Egerton ; “you must have it your own way.”

But he left not the dinner-table without making a resolution, that however great the bore might be, he would steam to New York as early as possible, and not steam back again till he had visited every state in the Union.

Perhaps there might have been some little irritation of feeling in the mood which dictated this resolve ; but he had pledged the promise to himself in earnest, and would not have revoked it, even had his after thoughts led to still greater repugnance as to the keeping it than they did.

“At any rate, I shall see Niagara,” said he, “there is an *overwhelming force* of consolation in that.”

So Mr. Egerton set forth, and had already very nearly performed his destined task at the time of our meeting him at New Orleans.

Excepting the person of Miss Beauchamp, which, with a degree of candour of which he really felt proud, he acknowledged to himself was by far the loveliest he had ever seen in any land ; and, perhaps, excepting also, her dress (the capricious sort of plainness of which rather piqued his taste to the acknowledgment that no garment more meretricious ever so well became a female form) ; with these two exceptions made, Mr. Egerton was by no means disposed to think that Miss Beauchamp was in any degree better suited to his taste than the rest of her countrywomen. He had dined twice in her company, and his attention had been particularly drawn to her by the uncommon beauty which scarcely a child could have passed by unheeded ; but he had thought her manner exceedingly defective. There was no amenity, no tranquil grace, no smoothness in it. Whatever she said, seemed spoken fearlessly, as if from very perfect indifference as to whether she might give thereby pleasure or not. And then her voice, though nature had really given her organs which should have rendered it a very sweet one, had something in its intonation which grated, as it were,

against his feelings. It could hardly be called a nasal voice, but yet there was a sort of singing cadence in it, which drew off the attention (at least of stranger-ears so constituted as those of Frederic Egerton) from what she said, to her manner of saying it, and he was perfectly ready to call the flexible young voice detestable. Yet for all that, he was ready to acknowledge, that he had hitherto not seen quite enough of her to judge her fairly; and he gravely determined that he would not be unjust, no, not even on a point of so absolutely no importance, as whether a trumpery American girl were a little more or a little less disagreeable.

In conformity with this high principled resolve, he had sought to converse with her on more occasions than one, but hitherto with very little success; and, upon seeing her accompany her mother into the balcony, while nearly all the rest of the company were scattering themselves elsewhere, he followed for the purpose of advancing his philosophical study of this peculiar specimen of the race he had crossed the Atlantic to scrutinise.

CHAPTER XI.

THE vulgar, but expressive, old phrase, "There is no love lost between them," might have been applied with the most perfect correctness to Miss Annie Beauchamp and Mr. Frederic Egerton; but they wore their dislike, such as it was, with a difference.

The gentleman, as we have seen, being rather persevering in his purpose of knowing more of the young lady, while the young lady, if left to herself, would have been perfectly well contented had she been assured that she should never see the young gentleman again. Nor did this difference arise from the fact on his part that he was ready to acknowledge her the most beautiful person he had ever seen; for, on hers, she was equally ready to acknowledge that he was, by many degrees, the handsomest person *she* had ever seen, and at the centre of both hearts there was the thought, "But oh! so perfectly American!" and—"But oh! so perfectly English!" the difference, therefore, arose from temper.

Annie was less speculative than Mr. Egerton; at least, when her mind was so completely made up on a subject as she felt it to be on the present occasion; and Mr. Egerton was more disposed to analyse, even though conscious that he already knew what the result must be.

"I suppose this is about the coolest place in New Orleans, Miss Beauchamp," said Egerton, venturing to seat himself on the farthest extremity of the long wooden sort of sofa which the young lady occupied.

"I dare say there may be a great many much cooler, for those who know anything about the place. Strangers never know where

to look for anything," returned Miss Annie Beauchamp, without condescending to turn her eyes towards him.

"Your observation is in contradiction to the remark generally made upon travellers, Miss Beauchamp. It has been often said that we almost all of us know more of the countries we visit than the natives themselves. For travellers, you know, make it their especial business to find out everything, while those who remain at home find only what happens to come in their way."

Annie drew her beautiful lips together for a moment, as if she did not intend to make any reply; but, upon second thoughts, she said, "I believe that would be perfectly true, particularly if speaking of English travellers, provided the word *disagreeable* were added to the word *thing*."

"What an odious girl!" mentally exclaimed the young man; "and with such profound ignorance too! What on earth does she know of English travellers?"

And then he cast a glance towards her, and took in at that glance, certainly without intending it, such a face, such a form, and such an attitude, as are only exhibited on the earth at intervals to show what a woman may be when no earthly accidents have arisen to injure the original intention of Heaven.

It is rather an old observation that "beauty will have its effect," but it is not the less true for its antiquity, and Frederic Egerton at that moment, if he did not quite forgive her, felt more disposed to hear her speak again than he had ever done before.

"Have you travelled much yourself, Miss Beauchamp?" said he, in a very gentle accent, and not at all as if he were angry.

"Alas, no!" she replied, without any caustic accent either, as if regardless that it was only a detestable Englishman who asked the question; but **it** was one that touched feelings with which his nation had nothing to do, and she forgot herself.

"You have not, however, lost much time as yet. If you love travelling, what is there to prevent your enjoying it?"

"Oh, there is nothing in the world, I expect, to prevent my enjoying it, except our not being able to set out. But if I can't make it convene to travel in a coach, I'll travel in a wagon, and if that won't do, I'll just get along on foot; for, living as we do, in the finest country in the world, it's a first-rate sin not to see it all over."

"Then you have no inclination to go beyond your own country?—you do not wish to travel in Europe?"

Annie looked up at him for a moment, and it was a very saucy glance which shot from her sparkling eye as she did so. She seemed on the eve of saying something very particularly anti-European, but she restrained it, and only turned aside her head and laughed.

"I should like to know what you are laughing at," said Egerton, quite determined upon not condescending to be angry with anything so exceedingly ignorant and silly as the opinions of Miss Annie Beauchamp, and at the same time feeling it quite fair to

make her talk, that he might have the twofold amusement of looking at and quizzing her. "Pray tell me," he continued, "what there is laughable in the idea of travelling beyond the United States?"

"The joke lies," she answered, after a moment's consideration, "in the notion of any one's wanting to see that musty, fusty, little bit of the old world which you call Europe, when they may remain to explore the opening glories of this bright, young world, which we call America, and that, too, with the proud privilege of being one of its citizens."

"Poor little fool!" thought Egerton. "What a pity that such eyes as those should have nothing better to inspire their wonderful expression than the fables of a handful of crackbrained, conceited republicans!"

Yet still he wished her to say more, and therefore resumed the conversation with great civility.

"Do you mean, Miss Beauchamp, that after having become well acquainted with the land of your birth, you shall feel no curiosity to see any other?—particularly that, for instance, whence the first white inhabitants of your own highly-approved land derived their origin?"

There was something in the wording of this speech that seemed to irritate the young American. She did not look either as if she meant not to answer it, but she paused a moment or two as if to select words for the purpose.

"Curiosity? Shall I have any curiosity to visit the tombs of my vastly respectable great-grandfathers? Why, upon my word, sir, if no better reward can be proposed to me for the trouble and fatigue of crossing the Atlantic, than seeing the crumbling relics of a thoroughly worn-out race, I really think it would be a great deal wiser to stay at home."

Mr. Egerton now smiled a little to himself; upon perceiving which, the colour of the beautiful Annie mounted to her temples, and the glance she gave him certainly amounted to a flash of indignation. This was hardly fair; he had borne *her* laugh more patiently. However, he thought it was very amusing to look at her in all her various moods, and thinking, perhaps, that he should not greatly mind it even if she boxed his ears, he looked as grave as he could, and replied—

"Of course you have studied, as an elementary part of your education, the present state of the mother-country relatively to the rest of Europe, or rather to the rest of the world? I believe the comprehensive plan of American female education considers this study as absolutely indispensable?"

"Yes, sir," she very gravely replied, "it does; and I do assure you that of all our studies, it is this which most awakens in our hearts that most excellent gift of pity, and those gentle feelings of commiseration, which Christian teachers consider it one of their first duties to create and cultivate. We are quite aware that the

noble race of men which now people the broad surface of the United States, must have derived their origin from a stock possessing the materials of greatness. And we look back upon this race with such moderate feelings of affectionate interest as a rational man experiences for the dust of his great-great-grandfather. But as we know that it pleased the Almighty Mover of nations to cause the estimable remnant of the community to forsake the falling country, when they perceived that it was become unworthy of them, and to seek refuge here, our affections naturally and rationally fix themselves upon the brave transatlantic portion of the race, not only because they are the fathers of the people to whom we belong, but also because the very reason for the *original* separation, as well as for the immortal *secondary* one, proves beyond the reach of any question on the subject, that THEY are worthy of all reverence and affection, and that those they left are NOT—though they are indeed, and ever will be, while they are permitted to retain their political existence at all, the objects of very sincere compassion."

"Upon my word, Miss Beauchamp, we are, or ought to be, excessively obliged to you," returned Egerton, not knowing whether he felt most surprised or provoked by the young lady's grandiloquent harangue. "Permit me to return thanks," he added, rising and making her a low bow, "for the testimony you have been pleased to exhibit of your benevolence towards the English nation."

"Poor people!" murmured Annie, casting her eyes down with a sort of pitying dejection, and at the same time heaving a deep sigh.

Egerton, puzzled and plagued by the strange form the young lady's patriotism had now taken, looked at her with as much curiosity as admiration, while she continued to retain her whimsically plaintive attitude; but when she furtively raised her eyes again, there was an expression in them which made him shrewdly suspect she was only amusing herself at his expense, and that it was malice towards him, rather than the love she boasted for her country, which had inspired her. If this were the case, he felt that the little republican had the advantage of him; and as the idea crossed his mind, it was doubtful whether he was more piqued or provoked. The former feeling prompted him to continue the conversation, in the hope of being able to use weapons of somewhat the same nature in his defence, while the latter suggested the wisdom of leaving the very absurd young lady to herself. But while he yet doubted, the question was decided for him by Major Allen Barnaby's bowing himself off—a ceremony which was immediately followed by Mrs. Beauchamp's advancing towards them, and saying—

"Come, Annie, my daughter, I want you in my chamber—I have got one or two jobs that I expect you must do for me—and besides, I have got something to say to you."

Thus summoned, Annie gave one rapid, wicked glance at the

countenance of the young Englishman, and with a slight parting bow, retired.

Egerton replaced himself on the bench, and fell into a fit of musing.

"She is insufferable," he muttered, "I cannot endure her!"

A movement of impatience caused him to rise again and pace the long balcony of which, luckily for his irritated feelings, he had the sole possession, with slow and discontented-sounding strides.

"I hate the country!" he ejaculated, half aloud; "I hate and detest it from one end to the other. The negroes and Indians are the only interesting part of the population, and the only thing approaching to civilised society that I have enjoyed since I landed was at the German village at—at—at—heaven knows where. Would to heaven that this self-inflicted penance were over! I must steam up that nasty muddy Mississippi, or I break faith with myself, which I never will do, had every house I could enter half a dozen Miss Annie Beauchamps in it—and a pretty company they would make!—well enough, to be sure, to the eye, but able to sting a man to death with their odious tongues! To-day is Wednesday. Steamboats, I believe, go every day. Thursday, that's to-morrow. I wish to heaven I could go to-morrow; but that I cannot do, because I have promised the priggish Mr. Horatio Timmsthakle to go to the French play with him. But I must speak about my linen from the laundress for Saturday. I will positively not stay in this detestable house a single moment longer than Saturday."

And having thus soothed his irritation, he stalked through the saloon into the hall, and out of the house, having encountered a negress in his way, to whom he gave strict orders that his linen should be in his room ready for packing by Friday night. This sort of notable thoughtfulness having been taught him by necessity, in consequence of his having, for the first time in his life since he left college, set off upon a journey without a servant; a piece of self-denial to which he was advised by one who knew by experience the effect of the United States upon an English domestic.

Mrs. Beauchamp and her daughter, meanwhile, mounted the stairs, and having reached one of the apartments sacred to their own use, the elderly lady closed the door of it, and making the fair Annie sit down near it, began to address her as follows:—

"I have something to tell you, my dear child, that will, I expect, go straight right away to your feelings as it did to mine. I know how you have been brought up, my daughter, and it is an out-and-out impossibility that you should not have all your high patriotic notions set blazing by what I am going to tell you."

Annie listened very attentively; but had she spoken the truth, and the whole truth, concerning what was passing at her heart, she would have said—"No more patriotism just now, dear mamma, if you please, because I have been working so hard at it, that I am right down tired." But of course she said nothing of the kind, and Mrs. Beauchamp went on—

"You know only too well, my dear child, how shamefully the United States have been abused, vilified, and be-littled by all the travellers who have ever set foot in them for the purpose of writing books about us. I don't say too much, do I, Annie, when I declare that this has positively amounted to a regular national calamity; and I'll give any one leave to judge what it must be to the feelings of a free people, who know themselves to be the finest nation in the world, to have one atrocious, unprincipled monster after another, come and write volumes upon volumes, in order to persuade the rest of the world that we are lots behind-hand with everybody, instead of being, as we really are, first and foremost of the whole world. Doesn't it drive one mad, Annie?"

"It drives one into very great anger, mamma," replied her daughter, with something like a sigh.

"Well, then, my darling, what will you say to my first-rate, unaccountable good luck, when I tell you that I have just been applied to by the most gentlemanlike European, to my fancy, that ever put foot in the States, to assist with *my* information, *my* feelings, and *my* opinions, in composing a work, the express object of which is to do justice, at last, to the Union?"

"And who, mamma, is the author you are to assist?"

"My dear, it is the lady the most striking and distinguished in appearance of the new party that came to the house yesterday. She looks like a woman of a very commanding intellect; and her husband has told me that she has been a most admired author for years in her own country, only that she is of too retired a character ever to have put her name to any of her works."

"Is it that enormously tall and stout woman, mamma?" demanded Annie.

"Yes, my dear, it is the lady who is the stoutest of the party; it is Mrs. Allen Barnaby."

"I should not have fancied her a particularly shy person," said Annie, gently.

"I must insist upon it, child," returned Mrs. Beauchamp, with a great deal of energy, "that you do not permit yourself to take up any absurd prejudices against this lady, who, I positively declare, seems sent by Heaven to do us justice. And remember, if you please, my daughter, how very little you know about the higher classes of people in England. Depend upon it, that whatever you see in her, which strikes you as being out of the common way, is just the greatest proof of her rank and fashion. You heard what she said yesterday about going to court? And though, as a citizen of a free country, I thought it my duty to put in my say against courts altogether, and all such-like abuses of the human intellect, nevertheless, I am not such a fool as to be ignorant that none but the very highest classes of all, are ever permitted to come within-side the walls that hold the queen; and though I hate and despise all such tyranny, it is quite right, in such a case as this, to remember all we do know of their abominable old-fashioned ways, in

order that we may understand a little what we are about, which is the way, you know, to avoid disagreeable blunders. I am sure nobody will suspect me, such a thorough-going patriot as I am, for being likely to have any over-great respect for queens and princes, and such like; and I dare say, Annie, you heard the considerable sharp set down I gave her yesterday on that very subject; but for all that, I know what I know; and it is something, I can tell you, in the way of good luck, when one is getting a little close and familiar with an English family, to find that they have been at court. In course, our first feeling ought to be suspicion about everybody that is English; and it is very convenient, by times, to get at the whole truth about people. Don't you think so, my dear?"

"Yes, mamma," replied Annie, rather absently; for indeed she was not much thinking of what her mother had said, having been occupied during nearly the whole time they had been together in endeavouring to recollect all she had said to Mr. Egerton, and was rather tormenting herself with the fear that she had not been sufficiently caustic and severe in her manner of treating him.

Luckily for the harmony of the dialogue (for Mrs. Beauchamp liked to be attended to), this indifference on the part of the young lady was not remarked, and her mother, still in the highest good humour, went on to explain a project she had conceived, by which every part of Mrs. Allen Barnaby's important work might be benefited by her information and superintendence.

"And now, my dear," said she, "I must make you acquainted with what I propose to do, and it is a great satisfaction, my daughter, for me to know that it is just exactly the very thing you will like best. You know, Annie, how often you have been at father and me about taking you to travel up and down a little, that you might see and know something of the glories of the Union, over and beyond what all my teaching could make you understand. Well, my dear, and you know, too, that I have always promised that travel you should to Washington and to Niagara, and, one after the other, to all the Atlantic cities if we could make it convene with father's will and pleasure. But up to this day, Annie, I have never been able to get anything better from him than just off and on sort of promises; and his reason for putting it off so everlasting was, that though he loved you and I, too, a deal better than his eyes—and I am quite availed that he speaks no more than the truth when he says it—yet that for the soul of him he can't make up his mind to travel hither and yon, as he says we want to do, till we get east of sunrise, without a man companion for him to speak to—and that's why for he keeps us at boarding everlasting, which we two don't overmuch approbate either of us. But just observe how the matter stands now. These smart, clever people, and a large party of 'em too, with two men, you see, are actually going right ahead to make the tour of the Union. And the major, the authoress lady's husband, loves a quiet game of piquet, father says, as well as he does himself. And that he found out last night when they

started off together, you know, after dinner. Now it does seem to me, Annie, that nothing ever did convene so perfect as this. Here's the lady come on purpose to write a book on the Union, but honestly confessing that she don't know the name of one State from another, and, in course, still less about all the remarkabilities of our glorious and immortal constitution, and other requirements for such a business, whether about ourselves or our works. Well! then there's me, ready and willing to supply all she wants, and though I say it that shouldn't, no ways badly qualified for that same business either, seeing that ever since I was a girl at college, I have been always celebrated for my patriotism, and had a heart in my bosom ready to fight for the stripes and the stars, if such a thing was wanted, as father has told me scores of times. Then next comes father himself—wanting and wishing of all things in creation to please his darling Annie by taking her a touring, but never having the heart to set out, on account of having nobody in the evenings to take a cigar and a hand of cards with him. So then, to answer to that, comes the major, as ready to do both as the sun to rise in the morning. And then next, there's your darling beautiful self, my daughter, having your own heart's wish at last, and setting out on your travels for everlasting, stop you who can. Now what do you think of all this, Annie? Isn't it a pretty considerable piece of good fortune, daughter?—Say."

Annie had changed colour more than once during the progress of her mother's harangue, not a word of which escaped her, for the absent fit was quite gone. Had Mrs. Beauchamp been less completely occupied by her own share in the proposed arrangement, it is probable that she would have perceived that Annie's sensations in hearing them detailed were not of unmixed satisfaction; but partly because she was too intent upon all she had in her head to see very clearly what was before her eyes, and partly because she felt so very certain of her daughter's delight at the scheme, that she would scarcely have believed her in earnest had she objected to it, she perceived not these latent symptoms of dissatisfaction, and exclaimed, even before she answered—

"I knew you would be in raptures!"

Annie let it pass, and only smiled, which she certainly did the more easily, because a portion at least of the information she had received was decidedly agreeable, though she thought that if she had had the ordering of the scheme, things might have "convened" more perfectly to her satisfaction than they did at present.

Her objections, however, whatever they were, she kept to herself; and when she spoke at last, it was to say that she was very glad indeed, that she was going to see something more of the glorious and unrivalled country to which she had the honour of belonging, than merely Big-Gang Bank, Charles Town, New Orleans, and Natches.

"You are quite right, Annie, quite and entirely right," replied her mother. "I have been a great traveller in my day, a

very great traveller; and from my high connections in different States, have always been among people of the very first standing,—and to my mind,” she added, “no young lady’s education can be complete till she has pretty well seen the Union through. However, my dear, we have no great cause to complain of father either, as yet, for we must remember that you won’t be seventeen till fall, and so there is no great time lost. But there is one thing, Annie, that in a small way troubles me, and I will tell you what it is, my daughter, because I have a notion that you might give us a little help, if you’ll be clever enough to do what I wish.”

“What is it, mamma?” said Annie, with one of her beautiful smiles, “I am ready to do anything to please you.”

“That’s a jam girl—and this is it then. Those two elderly-looking women, you know, that have come along with this celebrated authoress, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, I can’t help having a fancy that they must be people of great consequence, because they are both of them so unaccountable ugly and stupid, that I don’t see the likelihood of any Christian soul taking the trouble of bringing them out all this eternity of a voyage if they were not; or, at any rate, they must be somebody that this new friend of mine, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, must think a good deal of, and of course would not like to have slighted. And the truth is, Annie, that as I know I shall have enough to do to fully enlighten the mind of the writing lady about the Union, I don’t look forward at all, I can tell you, to having any time to bestow upon them; and as to your father, his hatred to ugly old women is so great, that I expect nothing in creation would make him consent to my scheme, except just the pleasing you, and having his game of piquet from sun-down to bed-time, without having the trouble of trotting out to look for a play-fellow, which I calculate he abominates further than most things. This being the way the case lies, darling, what I want of you is, that you would just be a little conversable and genteel in your attentions to these two poor queer old souls. Will you, dear, as your share and payment for all the beautiful miles you are going to travel? Will you, Annie?—Say.”

“Certainly, mamma. If I am to travel with these English people, I will endeavour to be as civil to them as I can. But I expect they will find me very dull company, for it is rarely that I find much that I should like to say to any strangers, and especially to English. But don’t think I object, dear mamma; whenever I can find anything to say, it shall always be said to them.”

“Oh! but, Annie, you must be very civil to the major, and to his lady into the bargain, and also to the splendid-looking young lady, their daughter, and to the foreign gentleman, their son-in-law; or else, mercy on me! we shall be getting into a terrible scrape, I guess, and having Madam Barnaby saying in her book, that whatever the rest of the country may be, the young ladies are the most disagreeable and least elegant people throughout the Union. Don’t be doing anything to get that said, Annie!”

"Mamma! I will do my very best to please you," replied her daughter, very gravely; "but there is one thing that I will not promise, because in my heart I don't believe it is one that I could ever perform. I cannot promise you to speak very often to the married young lady, the daughter."

Mrs. Beauchamp frowned, and shook her head.

"I see by your looks, Annie," said she, "that you are getting into one of your obstinate fits, when you will pretend to know what people are better than your mother does, which of all impossibilities is the most impossible, and you a girl under seventeen! Now don't Annie, don't. There's a fine girl! Don't vex me, just when I am trying to do my very best to serve my dear persecuted country, and to please you into the bargain! It is very cruel of you, Annie, very."

And poor Mrs. Beauchamp looked very much as if she were going to cry; but her beautiful daughter ran to her, and drove away every indication of the kind by a kiss.

"Trust me, mamma," she said, "I have promised you that I will do the best I can; and so I will. Shall I go this very minute and find out these Miss Perkinses?—that is the name, I expect, isn't it, mamma? Shall I go to them now, wherever they are, and ask them if they will take a walk in the balcony? I am sure it must be cooler than the room they have got, poor things; for Cleopatra told me that our sly lump of soft sodder, Mrs. Carmichael, had persuaded them to lodge themselves in a little hole of a garret looking exactly west, that she might keep a decent room vacant, in case any of her 'regular New Orleans Bows,' as she calls them, should offer themselves. I will go to them directly; shall I?"

"Yes, do, darling, and I will go too, and see if I can find my new friend, Mrs. Allen Barnaby."

"Pray, mamma," said Annie, rising to depart, "have you said anything to papa yet about your travelling scheme?"

"No, my dear, I have not," replied her mother, with a smile; "but that is only because I have had no opportunity. I don't fear any opposition, Annie, there. You know, pretty well as I do, deary, that if I take care that the piquet and the toddy go right, nothing else is likely to go wrong."

Annie knew that as far as the word wrong meant opposition, her mother had the best possible grounds, namely, that furnished by many years' experience, for her confidence in having her own way; so she said no more, but walked off, shaking her head, however, rather mournfully as she went; for though she loved her mother, she loved her father too, and often regretted that his habitual indolence, which seemed to have absorbed everything like activity in his character, had permitted him to lay himself so completely on the shelf.

CHAPTER XII.

ANNIE was the first who succeeded in her quest, for she found the spinster sisters sitting most disconsolately in the great saloon, without even the semblance of an occupation, unless the ceaseless fanning of Miss Matilda could be called such, and by no means in a state of spirits to render any conversation they might have together soothing or consolatory to either party. As far as the exciting kind feelings in the breast of Miss Beauchamp could be advantageous to them, their palpable and evident forlornness was in their favour. She looked at them both for a moment, and felt that, English or not, they were thoroughly uncomfortable and forlorn, and had they sat with a pedigree in their hands (instead of a feather fan)—a pedigree proving them to be descended in a direct line from General Washington, she could not have smiled more sweetly, as she stepped forward to address them.

"I am afraid, ladies, you must find it very dull here," she said, seating herself opposite, and about midway between the two. "The New Orleans boarding-houses are not very famous for having many books, and it's so hot here in the daytime, that strangers hardly dare venture into the streets either to look for books or anything else. But mamma and I have plenty up stairs in our own rooms, and we shall be very happy to lend you some if you like it."

From the moment she entered, Miss Matilda, who had for many hours been meditating on the possibility of coaxing Mrs. Beauchamp (evidently the principal personage of the boarding-house set) into presenting them to some of her New Orleans friends, changed her attitude of ill-at-ease indolence, into one of fascinating animation, and she immediately replied—

"Thank you a thousand times, my dear Miss Beauchamp. How excessively kind and amiable! Yes, my dear Miss Beauchamp, I do indeed long for a few of the elegant indulgences to which I have ever been accustomed in my own country. Our residence is quite at the West End, and I am perfectly sure that you are sufficiently well informed to be aware, Miss Beauchamp, that in London nothing gives more decided fashion than that. In short, the fact is, that though I have no doubt in the world but that in a short time we shall like your country, and all the charming people in it excessively, yet just at this moment, that is, just at first, you know, we do find it rather dull."

Annie's only answer to this was a sort of acquiescent bow; and turning her eyes from the elegant speaker, she fixed them then, almost by accident, on the pale face of poor Louisa. That really worthy, but very unfortunate person, felt at the bottom of her heart that in securing her beloved sister from suicide, she had given up everything in the shape of worldly comfort and enjoyment

which had hitherto made her own life so desirable. And that sister was now looking so exceedingly ugly, old, and thin, that Miss Louisa, who watched her with all the tender solicitude of a mother, was falling fast into a profound melancholy, from the conviction, that though the promise she had extorted from her as the price of her own consent to this unhappy expedition, might secure her from self-slaughter, it would *not* secure her from hating the life so preserved; for as she gazed upon her long, pale, peevish face, she felt most miserably certain that no gentleman on God's earth, who was in his right senses, would ever think of such a thing as marrying her. When, therefore, Annie Beauchamp's eye fell upon her, her quiet and usually tranquil features were somewhat agitated by the thoughts that had taken possession of her mind, and her light gray eyes, which were not very large, had more tears in them than they could conveniently hold; but when she caught the glance of the young American fixed upon her, she made an effort to smile, and said, in an accent that spoke a good deal of gratitude—

"Indeed, young lady, you are very kind."

Annie immediately changed her seat for one that was close to her, and taking her hand, said, cheerfully—

"Now then, Miss Perkins, tell me what sort of a book you like best. Shall it be grave or gay? English or American? Prose or verse?"

"Any book," replied Miss Louisa, very considerably comforted at being addressed so kindly! "any book or newspaper in the world would certainly be greatly more agreeable than sitting with nothing at all to do, of any sort or kind. But the greatest kindness of all would be to give us something that my sister Matilda would like to read. She is a far greater reader than I am at all times, my pleasure being more in seeing that everything is tidy and comfortable at home. But poor Matilda is very fond of a novel, and if you chanced to have a pretty love story that she never happened to meet with before, I do think it would go further to raise up her spirits than anything. And if I could but see her looking a little happy again it would quite set me up."

Annie rose with the intention of immediately ransacking her little collection for love; but, as far as her own feelings were concerned, it was greatly more for the sake of the elder sister, than for the gratification of the younger; but Miss Matilda stopped her ere she reached the door, exclaiming—

"Oh! do not go, my dear Miss Beauchamp! A little of your delightful conversation will do me more good than all the novels in the world. My elder sister is one of the very best and most ladylike people in the world, I do assure you; though at present, of course, you see her to a disadvantage, so very little dressed as she is, and all that; but though she is quite superior as to her fortune and station in life, and all those sort of advantages, yet I won't pretend that at her age she would be likely to enjoy a

comfortable chat with a young person like you in the same way that I should do. I need not point out to you the difference there is between us in age; it is quite extraordinary, isn't it? A great many people won't believe that we are sisters. But I was going to say that if you happen to have a newspaper, there is nothing in the world that Louisa likes so well; and then while she is poring over that, you and I can talk."

Miss Beauchamp answered not a word to this, and we have therefore no right, perhaps, to be less discreet concerning her feelings than she was herself; but though she spoke not, she bit her beautiful under-lip severely, and if she had been sufficiently imprudent to speak at all, it would have been in a manner but little likely to assist the object confided to her by her mamma. She appeared, however, to be entirely occupied by taking a thorn out of her finger, and turned to the window in order to attain the degree of sight necessary to this delicate operation; and then, after the delay of a moment, she again turned to leave the room, saying that she would return again in a moment.

"What a kind, sweet-tempered young thing!" said Miss Louisa, as soon as the door was closed.

"A very nice girl indeed," replied her sister. "Her eyes are rather too large, and her hair too abundant, and too dark, to satisfy my ideas of perfect feminine beauty; but nevertheless she is certainly very pretty looking, and most uncommonly agreeable, considering she has never seen London, nor even Cheltenham or Brighton. I hope we shall become exceedingly intimate, for I think we shall suit exactly. I have got dreadfully tired of poor dear Patty, and that's the truth, though of course I don't mean to let any of 'em find it out. But, upon my word, it is enough to make anybody sick, hearing her run on so everlasting about her husband; and, to tell you the truth, Louisa, I am terribly afraid her husband begins to think so too; for it is not once, nor twice either, that I have seen him yawn as if his jaws would crack, when she has been kissing him; and it is plain enough, poor thing, that she does not at all approve his taking so much notice of any one else, for I have got some terrible sour looks from her on board ship when he has ventured to come where I was standing to watch the flying fish, or anything of that kind. Away she was, after him in a minute. But I am sure she need not have been afraid, for the very last thing I should ever think of doing would be encouraging the attentions of a friend's husband."

"Oh! dear no! I am sure you would not do any such thing as that, Matilda," said her sister, looking rather surprised and shocked at the suggestion; "but I can't say——"

Here she was interrupted by the return of Annie, with three thin volumes of unmistakable circulating library complexion in one hand, and a gray-tinted newspaper in the other. Setting the books down on a table by which she passed, Miss Beauchamp approached the meek Louisa with a newspaper.

"I am afraid this will not entertain you so well as a London newspaper would do, Miss Perkins; but at least you will find one half-column down here that is all about England, and you must not be angry if you do not find it very civil, because our newspaper people think there is no opportunity of serving their own country at once so profitable and so cheap as by abusing yours."

This was said in a tone and spirit so very different from that in which, a short hour or so before, the same young lady had discoursed on the subject of England to Mr. Egerton, that any person, hearing both, may be well tempted to accuse her of inconsistency; and really I know no defence for her, save that she *was* a young lady—a class which from long usage, by this time grown into something like prescriptive privilege, holds itself exempt from the necessity of always being of the same opinion.

"I am very much obliged to you, *indeed*," said Miss Louisa, receiving the odd-looking pages with a smile of genuine pleasure and gratitude. "It is so *very* kind of you to think about *me*!"

And while Annie still stood beside her, she turned her eyes to the paper, and began reading it, to show, perhaps, that she really did take great interest in a newspaper. The first, and indeed as it seemed, the only thing which particularly attracted her attention, however, on the present occasion, was a succession of little dingy pictures, one of which appeared to adorn every paragraph in the page which first happened to meet her eye.

"What *are* all these little men running meant for?" said Miss Louisa, looking up very innocently in the face of her new friend. "Is it to make the newspaper look pretty?"

Annie laughed.

"No, Miss Perkins," she replied, "neither the portraits nor the originals of these running gentry are counted very *pretty* in the United States. No! these figures are intended for use, not ornament; they are placed there to call the attention of the reader to the advertisement which follows, which is always about some runaway slave or other, and is to give notice that any one who finds him or her—for the ladies sometimes run as well as the gentlemen—is to catch them, and send them back to their owners."

Miss Louisa, though, as I have said, a very worthy woman, was not a very well-informed one, and knew as little about the great transatlantic subject of negro slavery as most people. Nevertheless she *had* heard of such a thing, and in a general way considered it, like the rest of the European world, men, women, and children, to be something exceedingly atrocious and unchristian. Without the very slightest affectation, therefore, for there was no such thing in her, she shuddered visibly, as her beautiful companion uttered the above words, and exclaimed involuntarily, "Oh dear! oh dear! how very shocking that sounds!"

Miss Beauchamp coloured slightly, and turned away.

"I have brought you some books, ma'am," she said, addressing herself to Matilda, after the silence of a moment. "I am sorry

I cannot stay with you any longer, but I am obliged to be up stairs."

Miss Matilda began a flourishing speech, about sorrow at losing her, and gratitude for her books, but before she had half finished the young lady had given them both a valedictory nod, and disappeared. The situation of both sisters was, however, essentially improved. Louisa had not only her newspaper to read, which, despite its melancholy pictures, was a great deal better than nothing, but she had also the great, the very great consolation, of seeing her sister look ten years younger, and twenty times less discontented, than before the fair Annie had paid them her unexpected visit, and before she had got three volumes of native manufactory, concerning love and matrimony, to read. Nor did these favourable symptoms altogether disappear even when she discovered that her book, though exceedingly interesting, was not without its faults, the greatest of which, in her eyes, was the gross absurdity committed by the author in introducing his heroine, as already in the perfection of beauty at the ridiculous age of sixteen! This blunder so strongly affected her that she actually began to think aloud, and exclaimed, without any intention of consulting her sister on the subject, "What a pity to spoil the whole interest by such nonsense as that! Any rational person; who knows anything of human nature, must be constantly expecting to hear of her being whipped and put to bed for some childish naughtiness or other. There is but one way of my finding any interest in the story, I am quite sure, and that way I shall take, for it seems beautifully written, and full of the most touching sentiments—I shall just consider it a misprint, and correct sixteen into six-and-twenty at the very least."

Perhaps at the bottom of her heart might have lurked the thought that to produce the perfection of full-grown female sensibility another ten years might have been added, with very manifest advantage to the interest and the truth of the story.

But notwithstanding these drawbacks of young love on the one hand, and negro slavery on the other, both the sisters felt themselves considerably better than they had done since they landed on the shores of the United States.

The position, meanwhile, of the real heroine of these pages was still more essentially improved. At the same time that her daughter went to visit the Miss Perkinses, Mrs. Beauchamp, by the aid of the black waiting-maid, Cleopatra, sought and found the retreat of Mrs. Allen Barnaby. The major having, as usual, wandered to a billiard-table, his lady was left in undisturbed possession of "her chamber," and was employing herself at the moment her new friend entered, in preparing for her important literary undertaking, being in the act of writing down, in a little blank-paper book, which she had just sewed up for the purpose, the heads of various subjects to which she immediately intended to direct her attention. Nothing could exceed the pleasure she felt at seeing Mrs. Beauchamp, except what she expressed. She immediately

laid down her pen, and hastening towards her, performed a ceremonious courtesy, while she frankly extended her hand, which was intended to typify and express, as it were, all the stately dignity of the old world, combined with the unsophisticated cordiality of the new.

"I hope I don't break in upon you, ma'am, at a time that don't convene?" said Mrs. Beauchamp. "I see that you are already got to your writing, which agrees with what your good gentleman told me, but now, was the employment as was most likely to occupy you just at the present."

"And for that very reason, my dearest Mrs. Beauchamp," replied the animated Mrs. Allen Barnaby, "I am enchanted beyond what I am able to express, at your having the excessive kindness to call on me. It is here only, Mrs. Beauchamp, in the retirement of my own apartment, that such a visit can be duly appreciated. I dare say my excellent husband, Major Allen Barnaby—one of the best of men, Mrs. Beauchamp—I dare say he may have ventured to hint to you that my purpose in coming to this most interesting of countries is, in effect, to do the very exact thing of which you were so eloquently speaking last night?"

"Yes, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, he has indeed, ma'am," replied the visitor, "and I can't say but what I heard the news with very particular pleasure, seeing that you are a lady so every way qualified to perform the work proposed, with honour to yourself, and satisfaction to those about whose concerns it is your intention to instruct the world. And if you do this, ma'am, you will have the glory of achieving just what nobody else that has tried, has ever been able to do yet."

"If I should indeed be so happy," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, modestly casting her eyes upon the ground, "I feel sure that I shall owe it to you. I certainly did come to this country solely for the purpose of writing upon it; but I always felt, even when most eager to undertake the task, that I must fail as so many others have done before me, unless I had the good fortune to form an acquaintance with some accomplished person of my own sex, who should be induced to assist me by counsel and information, such as, of course, none but a native can give."

"And it is that very thought of yours, ma'am, I will venture to say, that will certify your success," replied her new friend. "It is just exactly what nobody has ever done before, and it is for that very reason, I expect, that no traveller has ever yet produced a book upon the Union that can justly be called fit to be read."

"Heaven grant that by your assistance I may avoid their errors!" cried Mrs. Allen Barnaby, fervently casting her eyes towards the ceiling of the room. "I can safely say that no one ever undertook a task which caused greater anxiety, or a more ardent desire of success."

"There is no doubt of it, Mrs. Allen Barnaby—no doubt whatever, of your success I mean. nor of all the rewards in this

world and the next, which you will so well deserve to receive," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, with an ardour which was considerably more sincere than that of her companion. "You will, indeed, have every advantage," she resumed, "for not only will you see things without prejudice by being made to understand them really as they are, but from having been in the habit of writing so much in the old country you must have got the knack of it, as we say, and will find the work come to your hand quite easy, I expect."

"Yes, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, I have written a good deal," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a modest, meditative air; "and though during several years of certainly very successful publication a feeling of timidity, perhaps too long indulged, has prevented my ever meeting the public, face to face as I may call it, under my real name, I cannot now, as you well observe, feel any of the difficulties of a mere novice. I shall, on the contrary, set about my task with that delightful sensation of confidence which conscious ability I believe always gives. Do not impute vanity to me, my dear madam, from my saying this; but the fact is, that it would be the most contemptible affectation were I to pretend ignorance of the admiration which my writings have produced. I have never published anything, I can truly say from the moment I first handled a pen, without its meeting the most brilliant success, and it would show a great want of common sense on my part were I to pretend now to fear that I should fail, and with such a theme too!"

"It would, indeed, be folly for any one to suppose such a thing possible," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, "but yet, I cannot help thinking," she added, after the meditation of a minute or two, "I cannot help thinking, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that you might bring your work forward in a superior sort of style, as I may say, if you would just consent to put in the title-page, 'by the author of,'—whatever previous works of yours have had the greatest success. I really would strongly advise you to think again and again of this, before you finally make up your mind against it."

"Do not mention the subject to me again, I entreat of you, Mrs. Beauchamp," returned the European lady, with some slight display of impatience. "You know not, to be sure it is impossible that you should know, how eternally I have been—I may say—persecuted in England with the same request, and, having resisted the most earnest entreaties of persons of station even too high for me to venture to name, can you really think that I ought to yield to any other? I feel quite certain that when you have thought a little more about it, Mrs. Beauchamp, and when you have brought yourself to recollect that there *are* in our country persons—or at any rate *one* person—whom it is by no means easy to refuse, you will perceive and acknowledge the necessity of my continued reserve."

"Why, as to that, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," returned the republican lady, "I have no great notion of any one person being such

a vast long way before all the rest as you seem to make out, and, to say the truth, I can't realise to myself the possibility of such an elegant smart woman as you are, being chained up in that way, as I may call it, by any one. Why, there's our president, now, he's first and foremost in course, because it has been our will and pleasure to make him so; but, Lord bless your soul, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, he might ask any one of us to do anything from July to eternity, and it would never come into our heads to do it unless indeed for some profitable object of our own, which is quite another thing, and what all sensible men will calculate upon doing at all times. But for giving way to him for any other reason, he may march from Washington very considerably east of sunrise, before he will find anybody ready to do any such meanness. However, we won't talk any more about politics just at present, and, instead of it, I want you to show me what you have jotted down there."

And Mrs. Beauchamp, with a little natural and national curiosity, did just peep at the foolscap page which lay, half filled in large characters, after the manner of a list, before Mrs. Allen Barnaby. That lady's MS. however was not, as it seemed, yet ready for examination, for, with a good deal of dignified mystery, she laid a blank sheet over that upon which she had written, and said, "Not yet, dearest Mrs. Beauchamp, not yet, if you please, though this very paper, which I now conceal, is written expressly that I may communicate it to you. But as yet I am not fully prepared to do it. It will contain, when filled up, a list of questions to be addressed to yourself, on the particular themes that I shall consider it most necessary to touch upon in the course of my work; and may I not hope that you will kindly condescend to answer them?"

"And that's just what my very heart is longing and burning to do," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, her handsome face in a glow of patriotic excitement; "and I do hope it won't be long before you are ready to begin."

"If any immediate arrangements for our being a good deal together can be made, my dearest lady, I should be ready to begin our important consultations directly. In short, the major has promised to bring me home several whole quires of paper to-day, besides a large quantity of pens, and a bottle of ink. So you may see, my dear madam, from my giving him such a commission, that I have no intention to delay the business. However, I charged him to buy the paper at different shops, for fear of creating suspicion of what I was about. I always took the same precaution in London, when I began a new work."

"Dear me! Did you really? How very cautious!" And then, her curiosity whetted anew by this allusion to mystery, Mrs. Beauchamp once more ventured to return to the forbidden subject, and added, "Do now, just tell me the name of the least and littlest of all your books!"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby coloured violently through her rouge, and

for a moment felt convinced that the interesting history of her anonymous fame was suspected; but when she ventured to look again at the animated countenance of Mrs. Beauchamp, she perceived, with the greatest possible satisfaction, that she was altogether mistaken. Nothing was to be seen there but the most respectful admiration, excepting indeed that little imp-like sparkle of curiosity, which peeped out of her eyes, and which, under the circumstances, would certainly have been pardonable in *any* daughter of Eve, but in a transatlantic one the want of it would have been nothing less than unnatural. Mrs. Allen Barnaby, therefore, again rallied her spirits, and played off with great ability the part of an embarrassed and somewhat agitated *incognita*, to whom the removal of the veil would be excessively distressing, while the preserving it was exceedingly difficult. At length the scene reached its climax by her putting her handkerchief to her eyes, and exclaiming, "Spare me! my dearest Mrs. Beauchamp! spare me! The time shall come when I will have no reserves with you; but your own admirable judgment must tell you that just at this moment, when my nerves are naturally shaken by the contemplation of an undertaking which I feel to be almost awfully important, there would be great weakness in my suffering my spirits to be agitated by my making a disclosure which, I am well aware, would at once bring upon me the eyes of all America, as well as of all Europe. I implore you, therefore, for the present, to make no further allusion to my former writings, but rather let us employ the precious minutes with which you favour me by arranging how I can in the most effectual manner be thrown into the circle among which you usually live, in order to catch as much as possible, your views and opinions upon all subjects."

"Well, then," returned Mrs. Beauchamp, with the most perfect good humour, "I expect I won't plague you one bit more at present, as you say, about the works that have made your false name so celebrated. Not but what I'd give one of my fingers to know what the name was. However, we will say no more about it now; and instead of it I will tell you what my scheme is for our passing as much time together as possible. I calculate, in course, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that your plan in writing upon the Union, is to travel through all the most celebrated and wonderful parts of it?"

"Most assuredly," replied the authoress, with decision.

"Well then, my plan is to travel too," returned Mrs. Beauchamp; "because then, you know, as the things come in all their glory before our eyes, I can explain them to you, and make you realise their particular excellence at the first blush, as I may say. What do you say to that plan, Mrs. Allen Barnaby?"

"That it is the most admirable, the most perfect, the most inconceivably kind that could possibly have entered your head, and that so inspired, I must be dull indeed if I fail. But what does the colonel and your beautiful daughter say to it, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp?"

"Oh! Annie is delighted. She has long been dying for a travelling frolic; and she undertakes to do the honours to your friends, which will leave us to our studies, you know. As to the colonel, to say the truth, I have not yet mentioned the subject to him; but he is, I do expect, the very best man alive, and I am sure he will make no objection, provided the major can smoke a cigar and play a game of piquet. Can he, Mrs. Allen Barnaby?"

"The major is very fond of smoking," replied our heroine; "and I rather think too," she added, gently, "that he now and then likes a game at piquet."

"Well, then, I will answer for all the rest," resumed the energetic Mrs. Beauchamp, her patriotic ardour animating her even to her fingers' ends, which were already itching, as she said, to be at her packing. "The colonel will be back in a few minutes to take his morning iced julep, and then I will tell him all about it."

Mrs. Beauchamp was by no means "talking without her host," when she said that if the major smoked cigars, and played piquet, she could answer for all the rest. Of course she was too clever a woman not to know how to set the thing properly before the eyes of her husband. She said little or nothing to him concerning her project of redeeming the reputation of the United States, and undoing all the mischief which former travellers had perpetrated against this rudely-treated portion of the earth's surface, by taking the pen of Mrs. Allen Barnaby under her especial influence and control. She said little or nothing of all this, because she knew that, although her husband was, as a matter of course, an excellent patriot (what American is not?), yet nevertheless, the sluggish circulation of his blood, which, without greatly injuring his bodily health, had reduced his mental energies very nearly to the condition of those of a dormouse, prevented his greatly enjoying any long discussions on the subject. What she chiefly dwelt upon, therefore, was the great delight which his darling Annie would enjoy from travelling in the society of this very distinguished English party, and also the providential circumstance of their meeting with a gentleman who could both smoke cigars and play piquet, and thus render the performance of his long-given promise of taking his daughter "about a little," a matter of pleasure instead of annoyance.

"Very well, my dear," was the colonel's first answer; "manage it just as you like. If it's a good boat I shall be quite ready to start."

CHAPTER XIII.

WHEN Major Allen Barnaby learned from his wife that the travelling party, to be composed in the manner already agreed upon by the two ladies, was actually arranged, he smiled very good-humouredly, and said—

“That’s all very well, my Barnaby, and a capital hand you are to set a machine in action. But you don’t quite calculate, do you—as these curious fellows say—upon my being ready to pack up, and to go away at a moment’s warning? You do not in sober earnest expect that, do you?”

These words

Of doubt and dread

came like a thunderbolt—or rather like an avalanche, for nothing could be more *chilling*—on the ears and heart of poor Mrs. Allen Barnaby. Never having been from her earliest infancy in the habit of doubting her own powers, she had no sooner fully conceived the scheme of writing a book, than a well assured and very brilliant success immediately rose before her mind’s eye, as being perfectly certain, and that, too, no mere idle, windy, wordy success, born in the drawing-room, and buried on the staircase, but solid, profitable, money-getting success, that might do as much to help them forward, or very nearly so, as one of the major’s best games at piquet in Curzon-street; and overlooking the possibility that her husband’s view of the case might not be precisely the same as her own, she felt as much shocked and disappointed at hearing him thus speak to her as if he had suddenly declared that he meant to turn hermit, and for the future should require no money at all.

The dismay expressed by her countenance was so great, and, to say the truth, so comical, that the major for one moment laughed outright. But this was a species of amusement that, upon principle, he rarely indulged in, and before the fire which he saw mounting to his lady’s eyes had fully flashed upon him, the foolish fit was over, and his laugh exchanged for a smile of the most amiable domestic amenity.

“Come, come, wife,” said he, “you must not take what I say too gravely, either, and I cannot help laughing when I see you getting it into your head that I mean to take up my dwelling in this cursed place and remain here to be broiled everlastingly. Set your heart at rest upon that point, my Barnaby. If you are in such haste to be off, it’s lucky for you, perhaps, that the set here are just what they are. Why, my dear, will you believe it, I don’t think that out of the thirty or forty playing-men, that I have either tried myself, or watched others try, I don’t believe that out of the whole number there’s half a dozen that isn’t as keen witted

as myself—you understand me? Now that won't do, you know, by any means. What's good play, or a sharp eye, or the help of Tornorino, or anything else, with such a set of fellows? The difference between London and New Orleans seems to be just this:—On our side of the water there's a population of *flats*, with just a respectable sprinkling of *sharps* among them to keep men from going to sleep, and sinking into absolute stupidity. But here, upon my honour and soul, the whole population, old and young, strikes me as being *sharps*, with such a scanty supply of *flats* amongst them, as it breaks one's spirit to think of. And as for the diamond-cut-diamond sort of business, that is carried on here, it would not suit me at all. I am not used to it, and I am not quite so young as I was, my dear, and ceaseless, never-ending hard work don't suit me. I won't say but what I *might* be a match for them if I tried hard for it, but the profit would be little or none, for after a fair trial between me and most of 'em, I am greatly mistaken if we should not one and all come to pretty nearly the same conclusion, and that would just be to let one another alone."

"But how do these gentlemen make the thing answer themselves, my dear Donny?" demanded his wife, with her usual shrewdness.

"Why, I suppose, by watching for every new arrival, like sharks after a dead body," he replied; "but that would never answer for us, my dear Barnaby. Besides, if it did, they would get so confounded jealous of me, being an Englishman, that I should have no peace of my life. No, wife, I shan't stay here, I promise you—you have no reason to be terrified by that notion."

"But you have not lost anything to speak of yet, have you, my dear?" said she, her own satisfaction at the idea of their departure being for a moment lost sight of, in her domestic anxiety for the well-doing of every member of her beloved family. "You have not paid very dear, I hope, for what you have learned?"

"No, my dear," he replied, "that is not my way, and I should have thought you might have guessed as much. No; I thought I detected something the first night, just before the party broke up, that looked a *little* like a determination to let me win, but I was not sure of it; so last night I became a good deal more heedless and gay-hearted, you see, than before, and *then* I saw—ay, and heard, too—what put me up to them. Why, they had found me out in no time, and all their scheming was not to get the better of me, but to get me dropped out of one or two *set-to* games they had been planning, where they had got something like a novice to work at. So I very quietly let them have their way about it, and I think that puzzled them again a little. But that's only the fun of a moment, mind you, and would not last, I'll engage for it, long enough to make me sure of a dozen dollars. However, we can't suppose, you know, that they are all finished up in this high style, in every part of the Union, and further on I hope we shall fare

better, my Barnaby. I shall do very well, by-and-by, I dare say, so don't look uneasy about it."

"Heaven grant we may fare better, my dear!" replied his wife; "for confident as I am of the success of my work, it will by no means do, Donny, for us all to depend upon it, you know."

"No, my dear," said he, very demurely, "I don't think it will. Nevertheless, wife, I do not intend, mind you, to set off post haste, just after what happened last night. They would understand it exactly as well as you do, and a little better too, perhaps, for you will be thinking, naturally enough, that your book has something to do with it; while they'd know, well enough, every mother's son of them, that coming out here to see what I could do, I had met with my match, and was off to find game less wild elsewhere; and I'll leave you to judge the sort of *introduction* that would follow after me. So, if you please, my dear love, we will not start in a bustle, and you must please to tell your new friend, Mrs. Beauchamp, who, I suspect, manages her husband more completely than even you do yours, my Barnaby, that you intend to begin your examination of their magnificent country *here*, and you may ask her, if you will, to introduce you about a little. Everybody seems to know them, and I am told that Beauchamp has the finest estate and the largest gang of slaves in all Carolina."

However *well* Mrs. Allen Barnaby might manage her Donny, she knew what "if you please, my dear love," meant, as well as an old mare on a common knows the length of her tether; and she, therefore, hazarded not one word of objection to this prolonged abode at New Orleans, though she not only longed, with extreme impatience, to set off on the progress which her new friend had sketched out to her in such inviting colours, but she also earnestly desired to remove herself from an atmosphere where she was perpetually uttering prayers, the very reverse of *Hamlet's*, and wishing that her too, too melting flesh were more solid, and *not* thawing and dissolving itself into dew, as it did at present. There was, however, something in the idea of being introduced into New Orleans society by a person whom everybody knew, and who had the finest estate and largest gang of slaves in Carolina, which was very consolatory, and like a wise woman, she immediately fixed her thoughts, and brought her conversation to bear on this most agreeable portion of her husband's discourse.

"That is a capital good idea of yours, major," said she, "about asking Mrs. Beauchamp to introduce us, as if just for the purpose, you know, of enabling me to describe the society in my book. And with that notion in her head, she will pick out the very best and genteelest, see if she don't."

"I have no doubt of it," he replied, with a sagacious nod; "and I shall choose, my dear, to be included in this visiting, for I know of old, that New Orleans is accounted one of the first places for play, of its size, anywhere; and that makes me think that it's likely enough, coming here as a stranger, with my family and all,

so very respectable and domestic, I may do better in these drawing-rooms for the time we stay, than I have any chance of doing among the regular set at the gaming-tables. So I don't care how soon you set about talking to her on this subject; and you may say, you know, that in a new place, as this is to you, it has always been your rule to go nowhere unaccompanied by your 'excellent husband.' You understand me?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly, my dear; and I'll do the thing as it ought to be done, you may depend upon it. But, I say, Donny dear, there is no occasion, is there, for me to take those poor dear lanky-looking Perkinses with me, everywhere? It will be all very well when we are in lodgings anywhere that we should all be together, because if it's the same here as in London, that makes a great difference in paying for the drawing-room; but it will be a dreadful bore, won't it, if we can never go out anywhere without them? I am sure I don't know who'll ever ask us."

"On that point, my dear, I have not a word to say," replied the major, shaking his head. "It is one of those female, lady-like mysteries with which I positively can have nothing to do. It was you, my dear, and your daughter Patty, that arranged their coming with us, and now, if you like it, you may arrange that they shall be sent back again. If you had requested to bring Mother Redcap I should have consented, provided she could have paid her expenses, and if you had her here, I should let you do precisely what you liked with her. But I must not be plagued about it, Mrs. Barnaby."

"No more you shall, dear; I'll manage all that. And now be off with you, there's a good man, for I shall have Mrs. Beauchamp knocking at my door in a minute, and by what I hear the boarding ladies say to one another, they would be shocked dreadfully to find you here,"

"Shocked to find me in my own room, wife?" said the major, somewhat surprised.

"Yes, they would indeed. It does seem droll, to be sure; but Mrs. Beauchamp says that every lady's *chamber*, as she calls it, is considered in all the boarding-houses, the genteelst place to receive company, lady company of course, and therefore that their husbands are never permitted there."

"Well then, I'm off. I'll just ramble about a little among the billiard-tables this morning, but I shall be devilish careful how I play. So you must not be over anxious, my dear."

* * * * *

The sociable anticipations of Mrs. Allen Barnaby were not disappointed, for hardly had the major disappeared before, as she had predicted, the gentle, lady-like knock of Mrs. Beauchamp was heard at the door. The well-pleased tenant of the "chamber," confined not her welcome to the ordinary words "come in," but hastening to the door, threw it open to its widest extent, and did everything

that smiles, nods, hand-pressings, and rejoicing expletives could do, to prove the delight which the visit gave her.

The two ladies then seated themselves on a comfortable sofa, and smilingly began to compare notes on the explanatory interviews they had had with their respective husbands, since their conversation of the preceding morning. Both declared that, far from finding any difficulty, the plan they had formed had met with the most cordial approbation from the gentlemen, both concluding her agreeable statement nearly in the same words, namely, "I must say that whenever I particularly wish any thing, the colonel (or the major) very rarely opposes me."

And then, having reached this point, Mrs. Allen Barnaby said, quite as a matter of course, that some short time however must be given to becoming better acquainted with the charming town they were in, for that it would be dreadful to write a book on America, and find nothing to say of so very fine a city as New Orleans.

"God bless my soul! I never thought of that!" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, with the look and voice of a sincere penitent. "Most perfectly true! to be sure, most perfectly true! I shall never forgive myself, I do think, for ever dreaming that you could start as we talked, right away up the river, with never a word said of such a glory of a city as New Orleans! I expect I had better not tell this tale against myself at Mrs. Carmichael's dinner table, or I shall get more sour looks than would be at all agreeable. However, we'll both of us remember the proverb, 'least said is soonest mended,' and never say a word about it; you understand me, my dear lady? Yes, to be sure you must, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," she continued, after meditating a moment, "you must see the theatres, both French and American; and the glorious quays, and the magnificent levee, and we must get to the place where you'll be sure to see the most steamboats together, such a sight as you never saw before, I calculate. And then the market! Oh, such a market! every individual thing coming by the river, and no other earthly way, so smooth, such a current, and so unaccountable beautiful! And then there will be the shops. You London ladies will find the difference between these shops and yours, I expect; for here it is altogether one and the same thing as if you went into the shops at Paris, even down to the talking French behind the counters, which we calculate gives a very genteel air to the town, being foreign-like without being English, which is what, as you want to know everything, you will excuse me for saying, we prefer. But I have little or no doubt, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that when your book appears, such a book as, between us, I am sure we shall be able to make it, all those little unpleasant feelings will wear away, and you will come to be quite as popular among us as the French themselves."

"Heaven grant your delightful prophecy may come true, my dear madam," returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, every feature, as she listened, expressive of attention and deep respect. "That it should

prove so, is, I may truly say, the first and dearest wish of my heart! But it seems to me, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, that notwithstanding the many interesting things you have mentioned, you have omitted one that is almost, I think, the most important of all."

"Have I, indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, looking in no degree displeased by the remark. "But I have no doubt you are right; it is indeed a great deal more likely that you should be right than not, for this country, from end to end, is so crammed full of wonders, of one sort or another, that I expect one must have a most unaccountable good memory not to forget some of them. But tell me, my dear lady, what is the particular thing you mean?"

"It is your own fault, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp," replied the anxious inquirer, "if I *do* think it the most important of all," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a very charming smile. "If I had never seen or conversed with *you*, I might not perhaps have been so very desirous of acquiring the power of describing the **SOCIETY** of the country. This is it, which I must confess strikes me as the most important feature of all, especially in such sort of work as that which I intend to produce."

"And you *are* right, I guess, as sure as there's a sun in heaven. No doubt about it; and what in the world I could be thinking of to suppose you could begin, even for a single page, without *that*, is more than I can guess, I promise you. I suppose I thought that was sure to come as a matter of course. And so I suppose it would, in the long run, but you are a deal more smart and thoughtful than I am in turning your mind to it from the very first. Luckily there's no time lost as yet, however, and a few notes of my writing to some of the people of first standing in the town, will settle the matter at once."

"I know not," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with much feeling, while her jocund heart fluttered in her bosom, as she remembered the trunks full of fine furbelowed dresses she had brought from London, "indeed I know not how I can ever thank you enough for all the trouble you are taking for me! All I can say is, that you will not find an ungrateful heart."

"All I can do, and ten times more, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, may be out and out repaid, I expect, if you will but exert your talents for us," replied Mrs. Beauchamp. "All I want in return is that you should portrait us out to the world for just what we really are, and that is the finest nation upon the surface of God's whole earth, and as far ahead in civilisation of Europe in general, and England in particular, as the summer is before winter in heat."

"On that point fear nothing," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a sort of concentrated earnestness that seemed quite sublime to Mrs. Beauchamp; "my bosom seems to have received a spark from yours, and glows warmly, and I trust brightly, with the desire of teaching the world where to look for and where to find all that

is noblest in man. But tell me, my dear friend, permit me to call you so, tell me in what style do the ladies dress at the parties to which you so kindly propose introducing us? Will feathers be considered as too full dress? I have many sets that are exceedingly magnificent, but on this point I shall really wish to be entirely guided by you."

"Well, then, ma'am, I may say in return, that for the most part the ladies of New Orleans don't consider any dress whatever as too elegant for their parties; and provided your feathers come from Paris, I don't in the least question but what they will be very much approved. Perhaps, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as we are on such comfortable and clever terms together, you might not object to my just looking over your dresses? It is what we American ladies don't at all scruple to ask from one another, and I expect that there's few females to be found anywhere as better understands the thing than we do."

* * * * *

It was quite impossible that Mrs. Beauchamp could have made any request with which Mrs. Allen Barnaby would have complied with greater pleasure. Partly by the aid of the ready money which had floated round them during their few months' prosperous abode in London, and partly from the credit which had resulted from it, Mrs. Allen Barnaby had contrived to "*rig herself out*," as she called it, with a prodigious quantity of fine clothes. Nearly the first thought which crossed her mind when informed by her husband that she must prepare to cross the Atlantic, was *how* she should be able to convey these treasures with her. She had pulled them, and caused them to be pulled forth from their various repositories, and probably any woman of nerves less firm than her own would, on seeing the accumulation, have abandoned the idea of conveying them ALL with her as a thing impossible. But not so my heroine. As we are told is often the case with the noblest minds, difficulties on such an occasion as this, only seemed to generate strength throughout her whole frame. A new, a very new and original thought struck her as she gazed at the masses of velvet and satin piled around her in her Curzon-street bed-room, on the afternoon of the day which succeeded her celebrated ball. For one short moment indeed her spirit seemed overwhelmed, and she muttered the word "impossible!" But in the next the thought above alluded to suggested itself. She fell into an attitude of deep meditation. The fore-finger of her left hand pressed to her forehead, the right hand extended as if to forbid the approach of any one to interrupt her, and her eyes closed. For a few minutes she stood thus silently and wholly absorbed, then arousing herself from the sort of trance into which she seemed to have fallen, she said to the Abigail, who stood staring at her, "Where were all the hampers put, that brought in the wine which your master ordered when we first came into the house?"

"I don't rightly know, I'm sure, ma'am," replied the woman, "but I somehow think they are in the coal-hole."

"Coal-hole!" repeated her mistress with a natural shudder. "You mean one of the cellars, I suppose, you vulgar creature. Such a house as this has no coal-hole. Just go to the linen press up stairs and bring down all the sheets and table-cloths you can find, ay, and all the towels too. Make haste, I shall be back in a minute."

A mind of less intense energy would probably have contented itself by issuing orders for an examination of the contents of the coal-cellar, but that of Mrs. Allen Barnaby was differently constituted. She penetrated herself to the dusky and dusty region, herself held high the candle, which enabled her to reconnoitre its contents, and herself witnessed the drawing forth of hamper after hamper from its remotest corner. A mind of less intense energy, too, might, considering the purpose to which she desired to apply these Hampers, have shrunk and felt appalled at the dingy condition in which she found them. But no weakness of the kind shook, even for a moment, her firm and steadfast purpose. She bade the cook, the page, and the coachman, who all stood staring at her from the area, to lug them out, and then she bade them take sundry brooms and brush them, and then she bade them use the handles of the said brooms to beat and shake them, and finally she bade them take them all, being eight in number, and of a goodly size, their straw abstracted from within, and the coal dust, as far as might be, from without, to her own sleeping apartment and there deposit them. The menials wondered, but obeyed. This done, she quickly followed the eight Hampers, and quickly was rewarded too, by finding how perfect was the success of her expedient. Guarded by the linen wrappers in which, with all the tenderness of a fond parent, she herself enveloped her treasures, she gradually saw her satins, her silks, her laces, and her velvets, absorbed before her eyes, till nothing remained to look upon but eight Hampers. Our retrospect has already been too long, and we therefore must not dwell upon the delightful feeling with which the labour thus accomplished inspired its projector; suffice it to say, that Madame Tornorino, as nearly as she could, followed her mamma's example; that not a candle-box or crockery-crate was left unoccupied; and that few ladies ever quitted their native shores leaving less of what they loved behind, than did the mother and daughter of our history.

But all these treasures, or at least by far the greater and more precious part of them, were still reposing in their wicker tabernacles awaiting the necessity, now apparently so delightfully near, of being called forth again into action. It is scarcely exaggeration to say, that every fibre of their animated owner's frame felt a quiver of delight as she remembered what she had to show, and listened to the invitation to display it. But some delay was, however, inevitable. The effect of dragging forth her splendid draperies from the unseemly recesses of a wine hamper, was in a moment so graphically

present to the soul of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that, despite her eagerness, she ventured to refer her friend to the morrow for the gratification of a curiosity which it was very evident she would have preferred gratifying to-day, but when the stately Mrs. Allen Barnaby said with dignity, "My travelling trunks, my dear madam, have not all as yet been conveyed to my apartment," Mrs. Beauchamp became aware that it was no good to press the matter farther, and courtesied herself off with an assurance that she would certainly not forget to write the notes she had mentioned, and had no doubt whatever that "lots of invitations would follow."

CHAPTER XIV.

THOSE among my readers who have studied the character of Mrs. Allen Barnaby with the attention it deserves, will easily believe that she lost no time in setting about the business that must of necessity precede her keeping her promise to Mrs. Beauchamp. The absence of the major at this moment, and indeed that of his son-in-law too, was exceedingly provoking. They were both tall strong men, and she knew pretty well that it was not very likely either of them would venture to refuse their assistance to her, had they been within reach of her commands. But of their whereabouts she knew nothing. And the job, as she told herself, must be set about instantly. But Mrs. Allen Barnaby had great ability, which never showed itself to greater advantage than when she was called upon by the exigencies of the moment, to put herself, and everybody else that she could influence, into a bustle. For one moment, and no more, she paused to think how she should begin, and then rang the bell sharply. Cleopatra answered it instantly, with the usual negro grin that seems ever to promise (poor wretches!) willing obedience. Mrs. Allen Barnaby stood ready with a little silver coin, commonly called in those regions a fip, in her hand.

"I have got a rather tough job to get through, my girl," said she, "and if you will set to and help me, I'll give you this."

Money is, perhaps, of all sources of earthly joy, what a slave loves the best, and though a negro eye does not sparkle, those of Cleopatra gleamed forth a look of great delight, and extending her strangely white palm, so different in hue from the rest of her skin, she said—

"Please, missis, I'se ready to do ebery ting."

"That is more than I want, Cleopatra," said the dignified lady, with a very condescending smile. "All I want is, that you should go into that outhouse at the back of the yard, you know, behind the kitchen, where all our luggage was put, that came from the custom-house, and get some of the other blacks to help you to

bring up into this room all the hampers you can find there. Do you understand?"

"Is all the nigger blacks to share dis, share and share alike, ma'am?" demanded the disappointed Cleopatra, holding out her fip' to the lady.

"No, Cleopatra, no, that is for yourself alone. Put it in your pocket, and say nothing about it to anybody. When all the hampers are brought into this room, and all the deal boxes, and the great earthenware crate into the room of my daughter, Madame Tornorino, I will give a levy to be divided among the people that help you."

"Ib I do it all my own self, will missis gib me the levy?" asked Cleopatra, very coaxingly.

"I will give the levy whenever the things are all brought up," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby; "but I tell you, Cleopatra, that you can't do it by yourself; it is perfectly impossible."

Cleopatra answered nothing, but grinned and departed. During her absence, Mrs. Allen Barnaby arranged her room in the best manner she could devise for the reception of the ponderous baggage she expected; and this done, she sought and found her daughter, and the two Miss Perkinses, whom she informed of what was going on, and then requested that they would all come into her room to assist her.

"I'll be hanged if I do, though," replied Madame Tornorino; "and while I'm slaving for you, mamma, I wonder who's to unpack my own things? I was just talking to Matilda about them when you came in, wasn't I, Matilda?" she added, addressing her friend with a wink, which demanded an affirmative. "I'll tell you what we'll do, mamma, and that will be all fair and no tyranny, which nobody you know can abide in this free country—which is news that I have just learned from Mrs. Grimes—I'll tell you what we'll do; you shall take Matilda, and I'll take Louisa, because I like her best for this sort of thing, and then we can both set to work fair and above board."

The two sisters eagerly proclaimed themselves perfectly ready to perform everything that was required of them, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby finding she could do no better, submitted to the arrangement. Whereupon the party, who were, during the discussion, assembled in the apartment of Madame Tornorino, divided—two ladies remaining where they were, while the other two proceeded across a wide corridor to the domain of Mrs. Allen Barnaby. But just as Miss Matilda and her respected friend reached the top of the stairs, which they passed in their way to its entrance, they were greeted by the sight of a huge hamper that seemed making its own way up the staircase. The figure of Cleopatra was, in fact, totally hid by the wide burden she had deposited on her head, but the next moment made it visible as, without looking to the right or to the left, the steadily balanced black machine passed on, with quite as little attention to what it met as a steam-engine. The two

ladies followed; Miss Matilda wondering, for she knew not of the hamper scheme, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby delighted. Ever since her arrival she had endured a sort of undefined anxiety about the time and manner of her reunion with the treasures which that hamper and its fellows contained. She knew, indeed, or at any rate she believed, that those treasures were safe, nay, that they were, as it might be said, near her; but there was something so unusual, so *impracticable* in the nature of their envelopments, that difficulty, uncertainty, and opposition seemed to overhang her tangible possession of them.

Nothing, in fact, short of the absolute necessity produced by Mrs. Beauchamp's request could have given her courage to issue the command she had pronounced to Cleopatra, and joyful was she—oh! very joyful, when she perceived one division of her unwieldy armament thus far advanced on its march towards her own quarters. What then were her emotions on entering her room to see all her eight hampers spreading themselves far and wide before her eyes, and the well-pleased Cleopatra grinning in the midst of them. She seized upon Matilda's arm, and grasped it fondly.

"Isn't that a comfort, Matilda?" she exclaimed. "I have hardly ever said a word about it, even to the major, but I declare to you, upon my honour and life, Matilda, that I always felt as if I never should get them all together again."

Miss Matilda stared with the most unaffected astonishment at the display which so enchanted her friend.

"Hampers!" she exclaimed, in an accent which expressed, better than any words could have done, how perfectly unintelligible their appearance was to her.

"Yes, my dear, hampers," returned their happy owner, laughing heartily. "Do you think I have brought over a stock of wine in them, Matilda?" Then turning to the negress, while she honourably drew forth the promised *levy* (value elevenpence), she said, "And where are the people who have helped you to bring all these up, Cleopatra?"

"De people is me own self, missis," replied the girl, holding out her hand for the well-deserved gratuity.

"Well, to be sure, you *are* a strong girl! I didn't quite intend to be giving three fips at a time to any nigger; but there, you shall have it as you have done the job so quickly; but remember, all Madame Tornorino's things are to be brought up too. However, I can tell you for your comfort that there is not one half so many as mine. I'm sure I don't know how it is, Matilda. I have always dressed Patty uncommonly elegant, as you well know, and I should not say I had ever begrudged her anything—should you? And yet, somehow or other, it always happens that I get quantities more things for myself. That does look a monstrous sight of dresses, doesn't it, Matilda?"

"Dresses!" exclaimed the still mystified Matilda. "Do all

those wine hampers contain dresses, Mrs. O—Mrs. Allen Barnaby?”

“You shall see, my dear,” was the reply. “Just hand me over that razor of the major’s, will you, Matilda? Now, then, which shall we begin with? Let me see if I can remember anything about it. My court dress is in the biggest of all. That’s it, isn’t it? Let us begin with that.”

The major’s razor was sharp and true, the stout whipcord snapped before it, again, again, and again, till the top was fairly disengaged on all sides, and fell creaking to the ground. Mrs. Allen Barnaby hastily snatched away the linen wrappers which still intervened between her and her court dress, and then stood gazing upon it as it lay richly heaped in all its splendour, with an intensity of pleasurable emotion to which the pencil could do better justice than the pen.

Alas! the poor Matilda! “How stood she the while?” All the finery she had in the world had crossed the ocean in one trunk, two bandboxes, and a bag, and all the consolation which the unpacking, handling, and setting it in order, could convey to her spirit, had been already enjoyed! At that moment, perhaps, she *did* envy Mrs. Allen Barnaby, notwithstanding her large waist and her gray hairs; but a little reflection caused her to turn her eyes towards the looking-glass, whence the youthful contour of her figure greeted her so cheeringly, that her spirits revived, and she set about the business she was summoned to perform, almost without breathing a sigh, though she had to hand out from this and the seven following hampers, not less than thirty-two dresses, three cloaks, five shawls, nine scarfs, sixteen *fichus*, and twenty-eight embroidered collars! Nevertheless, the operation was certainly in some degree a painful one. Yet was it soothed by the delightful consciousness, that not one of all the things she saw and handled, but would look five thousand times better upon her than upon its owner!

And thus passed the hours, till the first dinner-bell gave notice that it was time to dress. Miss Matilda heard it with joy and gladness, Mrs. Allen Barnaby with dismay. She had not found lodging-room, notwithstanding Mrs. Carmichael’s very handsome assignment of drawers, for one half of her belongings, and now actually wrung her hands, almost in despair, as she exclaimed—

“Oh! Matilda, Matilda! What *am* I to do with my three velvets?”

“We must think of that another time, my dear Mrs. O—Allen Barnaby,” replied the young lady, giving notice that it was her decided intention to depart, by walking straight towards the door, and instantly opening it. “I have got something very particular to do to the cap I am going to wear at dinner to-day,” she said, “and I can’t stay a minute longer.”

Before she could be answered she was gone, and the perplexed Mrs. Allen Barnaby looked around her with the mixed feeling of

enjoyment and distress, so frequently produced by the *embarras des richesses*. At this moment her husband entered, for the purpose of preparing himself for dinner, and great was his astonishment at the spectacle that greeted him. The eight huge hampers, though emptied of their contents, occupied not the less space on that account, but so choked up the room with their bulk, that it seemed nearly impossible to get across it.

"What on earth are you about, wife?" he exclaimed, and not, perhaps, in the gentlest of accents. "What is the good of dragging out all this trumpery if we are to start away up the Mississippi in a week or so? Is it for the pleasure of looking at it all? Upon my soul, I did not think you were such a fool."

Strong in conscious innocence, my admirable heroine lost not her temper, but explained to him, as he performed his ablutions, after having scrambled over the obstacles which impeded his approach to the washing-stand, how absolutely necessary it was that she should comply with the marked request of Mrs. Beauchamp, and show that she *had* some dresses fit for a Christian to wear.

"It is quite plain to me, Donny," she continued, soothingly handing him his rose-coloured satin cravat, "perfectly plain and clear that Mrs. Beauchamp, who is evidently a remarkably sensible woman, does not choose to commit herself by introducing strangers of whom she knows no more than the child unborn, to all the best families of New Orleans. Now she knows, as well as I do, that dress speaks for itself—and though she did it in a very genteel, ladylike way, I don't greatly doubt, I promise you, that if I had made any shuffling excuses, about not liking to unpack my things, we should presently have found her as shy as you please about introducing us. But everything will go right now, depend upon it. Just ask yourself if anybody in their senses could look upon such dresses as these, and feel any doubt of the high respectability of the person to whom they belong? Just ask yourself, major?"

"To be sure, there is something in that," replied the reasonable husband. "But how in the world, my dear, did you contrive to collect such an immense quantity of rich, expensive-looking dresses?—are they all paid for, my Barnaby?"

"My dear major, I always consider *that* to be a question between myself and my conscience, with which nobody, not even you, my dear, has any right to meddle. I know my own heart, Donny, and when I feel that it is for the advantage of my husband and child to do a thing, I do it, without stopping to consider what anybody else may think of it. If everybody did the same, Major Allen Barnaby, you may depend upon it the world would be a deal better than it is. But I am sorry to say that *duty* is often and often put out of sight, and that, too, by people who fancy they are mighty good. I thank heaven that I know what's right better than that comes to—and it is not a little that will stop me, nor ever did, when I feel that I am doing my duty to my family."

"You are a charming woman, my dear," returned the major,

with a very gallant air, "and as I have often told you before, were certainly made on purpose for me. But hark!—there goes that gong of a dinner-bell—come along, my dear! I suppose I must sit by Mrs. Beauchamp again to-day, as I have begun to do it, though I have no particular object in it now."

"Don't say so, my dear Donny," replied his lady, looking at him rather reproachfully. "Remember, that as a husband and a father, you have your duties to perform, as well as myself. You have still a great deal to do, my dear. As yet you have only made her understand that I am a woman of genius, and a writer greatly approved in my own country; and you should go on now to dwell upon our position in fashionable society, and among people of rank."

"Why, my dear," replied the major, giving a last brush to his whiskers, "they one and all of them hate people of rank—they say so every moment almost."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby drew on her black silk mittens, smiled, and nodded her head.

"Major," said she, while her eyes assumed an exceedingly clever expression, "major!—don't be affronted—but you don't see so far into a stone wall as I do."

"Don't I, my dear? Why, how far do you see?"

"Just far enough to convince me that they just dote upon titles and rank as much as ever I did, when I used to toady that horrid old cat, Lady Susan—and that's saying a good deal."

"Yes, so it is, my dear," replied her husband. "But if you say as much in your book, I don't think it will answer."

"No more do I, my dear," she rejoined; "but come along, Donny, come to dinner; don't be afraid, you may trust me."

CHAPTER XV.

THE dinner of this day passed very much as the others had done. Mrs. Carmichael wheezed, and eat, and hoped the gentlemen and ladies found the canvas-backs and the hominy good, and then wheezed again. Major Allen Barnaby did his very best to confirm all Mrs. Beauchamp's favourable impressions respecting the excellent standing of himself and his family. His lady sat, dispensing smiles around, the very picture of admiring observation and travelling intelligence. Miss Louisa Perkins unexpectedly found Annie Beauchamp seated next to her, and therefore felt herself considerably nearer being comfortable than at any moment since she first breathed the air of the United States; for she heard herself repeatedly spoken to, and that with the most engaging kindness and good nature. Miss Matilda believed herself to be looking much better than usual, having very successfully altered her blond and

amber cap, and got her hair to curl and hang *beautifully*. Patty pinched her husband's elbow, and laughed loud with delight, when he turned suddenly round to see what was the matter. Mr. Egerton talked a good deal to Miss Beauchamp, and flattered himself that he had made her exceedingly angry. And the rest of the good company went on very much as usual.

But on the following morning several important circumstances occurred, tending greatly to change the position of our travellers, and to advance each and every of them in the direction they wished to pursue.

Before leaving the room where the boarders breakfasted, Mrs. Allen Barnaby made her way to the side of Mrs. Beauchamp, and lowering her voice to a confidential tone, said—

“Whenever you like to come to my room, my dear madam, I shall be ready to see you. I have now got a few of the dresses unpacked, about which I desired to consult you.”

This was enough to secure the immediate attendance of the lady whose good opinion she wished to propitiate, and who had, indeed, feelings stronger than mere curiosity to make her accept the invitation. Never, perhaps, had Mrs. Allen Barnaby displayed more acuteness than when she guessed that Mrs. Beauchamp was anxious to ascertain the style of her wardrobe, before she ventured upon introducing her and her family to any persons of Louisianian importance.

This was precisely the fact. Not that Mrs. Beauchamp entertained the slightest doubt of Mrs. Allen Barnaby's being a person of great talent; of *that* she felt sufficiently assured, by the manner in which she admired everything she saw; but as it appeared that the party had omitted to bring letters of introduction to New Orleans (which the major accounted for by saying that their original intention had been to sail to New York), she confessed to her husband that she knew no other safe and sure criterion, excepting dress, whereby she could sufficiently ascertain their standing, to justify her introducing them to her tip-top friends; and to confess the truth, the note which was to secure the strangers an invitation had yet to be written.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby found means to watch, with a good deal of tact, and without at all betraying her deep interest in the matter, the sort and degree of effect produced by the display of her rich suits upon her American friend, nor had she any reason to feel disappointed at the result of the experiment.

Mrs. Beauchamp, indeed, said little, much less than was usual with her on most occasions; but she looked, she touched, she meditated, and she reasoned. The two ladies moved gently about, from chair to chair, from the bed to the sofa, and from the sofa to the bed, without any of the bustling noisy discussion which such an examination generally produces between female friends. Indeed, very little was said by either of them: Mrs. Beauchamp understood good manners a great deal too well to give utterance to the in-

creased and still increasing esteem, to which the velvet, satin, and lace displayed before her, gave birth; while Mrs. Allen Barnaby felt too much alive to the importance of that esteem, to interfere with the mental process, which she clearly saw was going on, to augment it.

The first words, however, or nearly so, which were spoken while this examination lasted, were uttered by the owner of the articles, which pleaded thus trumpet-mouthed, for her gentility. Mrs. Allen Barnaby said at length, but in an accent very nearly of indifference—

“You must not forget, you know, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, that you promised to tell me whether the style of any of these dresses would be fit for the society to which you have so kindly offered to present me.”

“No, indeed, my dear ma’am,” returned Mrs. Beauchamp, “I am not going to do any such thing, I assure you; and I am happy to say that I don’t see any one thing among all these handsome articles which you might not put on with the very greatest propriety when visiting any of the great families here. When you have been a little longer in the country, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, you will find out, I am sure, for you are a great deal too smart and observing to miss seeing it, that this southern part of the Union enjoys a much higher class of society than those who have been ill-advised enough to make themselves free states. They grovel, as we all say, in the very outskirts of civilisation, and have just missed the only way to make a republic in any degree elegant and respectable; and the cause is plain to those who don’t shut their eyes on purpose, because they won’t see. For it’s easy enough to guess, that no white free-born Americans, whether men, women, or children, will choose to make household drudges of themselves and work for wages. It follows in course then you see, that we must either scrub, and rub, and toil, and sweat for ourselves, like so many downright savages, or else that we must make use of the creatures that we have luckily got hold of—that are neither white nor free-born—and make them do what it is quite positively necessary that ladies and gentlemen must have done for them.”

While these words were spoken, Mrs. Allen Barnaby stood with her hands clasped together, and her eyes fixed on the speaker, with the air of one who is listening to the most important information that one human being can bestow upon another.

“Every word you utter, my dear madam,” she said, “convinces me that Providence has thrown me in your way, in order to prevent my putting forth to the world, with the authority of my name (which truth at this moment obliges me to confess is not inconsiderable) any of those false views on the subject of negro slavery, which, I blush to say, are too freely propagated in Europe. I see at once the full force of your argument, and you will do me a great favour if you will just sit down here for a moment while I make a memorandum of your observation. Never mind that crimson

velvet dress, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp—it was made at Paris last year; but you know the great misfortune of velvets is, that they are eternal!”

“My!” exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, following with her eyes the splendid robe with its gold stomacher, as it was thrown carelessly aside in order to give her a chair. “I expect it looks as if it was made yesterday. I do wish, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that if we go all together to-night to Judge Johnson’s, you would just wear that gown—it is first-rate elegant, and I expect there’s nobody so stupid as not to see that—and don’t you mind its being hot weather, Mrs. Allen Barnaby—we can learn you to fix the things under, so that you will hardly feel the difference.”

“Most assuredly I will wear that dress, if you approve of it, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp,” was the obliging reply, but spoken with the sort of dignified indifference which a queen might have shown upon a similar occasion.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby now took her new note-book and pencil out of her table-drawer, and sitting down before it, said in a tone which formed a charming contrast to that in which she had spoken of her dress—

“May I ask you, my dearest madam, to repeat to me a few words of what you were saying just now? This will amply suffice to recall the general bearing of your admirable and unanswerable argument.”

“I expect that what I was saying was about the ridiculous impossibility of republican gentlemen and ladies doing for themselves without the assistance of niggers. And what I think is the best argument of all, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, is just this—I want the abolitionists to be pleased to tell us which they calculate is the greatest sin; the letting black heathen nigger creturs what grows wild in their own woods, for all the world like so many painters and pole-cats, I want to know, I say, whether it’s wickedder to let them do the work of the Union, or to put it upon the gentlemen and ladies of the republic to do it for themselves, and them the very people that the immortal Washington fought for? The very people who got done finished the glorious 4th of July work, and that now stands in the face of all Europeyans as the pattern people of the world. Which of the two is it that ought to do the dirty work? Is it the heroes of the Stars and the Stripes, or is it the nigger slaves what belongs to them?”

Mrs. Beauchamp said all this slowly and deliberately; and the more so, as she observed that her friend was earnestly engaged the while in writing.

As soon as the sentence had reached its conclusion, Mrs. Allen Barnaby raised her eyes, fixed them solemnly on the face of her eloquent and animated companion, and having gazed at her for a moment, exclaimed—

“I never did; no, never in my whole life, hear anything put so clear and convincing as that. Why, anybody that doesn’t

see the truth of it, must be as stupid as the dirt under their feet!"

"No, no; it is not so much stupidity, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby," replied the patriotic lady, "as downright good-for-nothing wickedness—they do all see it—they MUST see it—they MUST know that a white man, a white American republican, is better than a nasty, filthy, black nigger slave—but that's the shocking part of the business, my dear lady. They see it, and yet they won't say so, on account of their poisonous party spirit. And it's just *that*, which threatens the safety of the finest part of the Union, and the only part sufficiently advanced in the elegances of civilisation to get themselves looked up to by Europeans."

This was said with so much vehemence, so much bitterness, and such heightened colour, that the acute Mrs. Allen Barnaby saw at once how very near, and how very important a subject they were discussing, and she quietly determined to act accordingly. She raised her hand to her forehead, which she pressed forcibly, as if to still its painful throbbings. She sighed, then sat motionless awhile, then sighed again, and at length, in a voice as deep and solemn as that of Mrs. Siddons herself, she said—

"I feel that this important, this *awfully* important subject excites my mind too strongly. It will require many solitary hours of deep thoughtfulness to represent it to the world in the light in which it ought to be viewed. I see all—all now—as clearly as the sun at noon-day, and it shall not be my fault if Europe does not see it too."

"Then you see it as I do, my excellent, clear-headed Mrs. Allen Barnaby? You range yourself on the side of the persecuted slave-holders?" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp.

"I do, indeed," replied the authoress, in a tone of the most dignified decision.

"Then if I don't prove myself worthy of such a friend, may I never be waited upon by a slave again," returned Mrs. Beauchamp, suddenly rising. "And now, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, I must leave you, for I have many things to do. I hope we shall enjoy our party to-night—I am told it is to be a very gay one."

"You are aware, my dear madam," said our traveller, remembering her husband's hint, "that we English ladies never pay visits unaccompanied by our husbands."

"And it does you honour, ma'am, great honour. The ladies of the Union are first-rate particular in that line themselves. In course, my friends will expect the company of the major, and not only that, I can tell you. The whole party of a lady of your views will be welcome, go where you will, in this part of the country, and that if you made up altogether half-a-score, instead of half-a-dozen."

"You are exceedingly kind and polite," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, feeling to her very fingers' ends the strength of her present position, and only hesitating in her acceptance of this whole-

sale hospitality, from thinking it possible that she might turn the glowing sentiment of gratitude she had excited, more exclusively to her own profit—"exceedingly obliging, indeed. But I do not think there is any necessity to trouble you with such a very large party. Our good friends, the Perkinses, are certainly the best creatures in the world, and I am only too happy to have them with me—in attendance upon me, I might in fact say—but there is no occasion whatever to ask for their being invited on the present occasion. It may be a check, perhaps, on future hospitality."

"You are very considerate and thoughtful, my dear ma'am," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, "and perhaps it may be as well——"

At this moment Madame Tornorino entered her apartment, and asking in her usual unembarrassed manner what they were talking about, was immediately made acquainted with the point they were discussing.

"How can you be so abominably ill-natured, mamma?" said the bride with some vehemence, "when you know Matilda is my particular friend? Pray ma'am, get her invited if you can, for I shall have no fun if she doesn't go. As to Louisa, indeed, she may just as well stay at home, for she is too dull for anything."

Mrs. Beauchamp declared Madame Tornorino was the liveliest young lady she had ever seen, but added that she could not stay another minute to listen to her, as she had *forgotten* to explain properly to her friend Mrs. Judge Johnson about who she was to have the happiness of seeing, and she must write to her again directly. And she did write to her concerning the large party of additional guests whom she requested her to invite, but not *again* inasmuch as she had never before written a word upon the subject, having waited, as before stated, for some satisfactory proof of the Allen Barnaby race being worthy of the promised honour. But on this point assurance had indeed become doubly sure.

"Nobody who knew anything of the higher classes in any country could doubt for a moment (as she told Mrs. Judge Johnson) that such dresses must belong to a *real* lady, but what," she added, "was *that* compared to the high-minded feelings, and the extraordinary abilities she had shown upon the subject so near to all their hearts?"

In short, she explained her motives so clearly, and expressed them so well, that as quickly as the black messenger could go and return, Mrs. Beauchamp was in possession of a note that authorised her to bring with her the five friends she had named.

"The *five* friends?" said Annie, when her mother communicated the note to her.

"Yes; all you know, except that poor melancholy-looking one, that does not seem as if she could take pleasure in anything."

"The eldest of the two Miss Perkinses you mean?" said Annie.

"Yes, my dear."

"Well, then, mamma, I shall stay at home with her," said the young lady, with all the pertinacity of a spoiled child.

"You stay at home, Annie? My daughter, you must be out of your wits to say so. I should like to know what father would say to that?"

But the young lady persisted, and, as generally happens in such cases, the mamma gave way; Miss Louisa was taught to consider herself invited, and Mrs. Beauchamp made up her mind to smuggle her in among the rest, or if challenged as to their numbers, to declare that it was a blunder of her foolish Annie's.

It so chanced that this little debate between Mrs. Beauchamp and her daughter took place in the great saloon, while some few of the boarders were waiting there in expectation of the dinner-bell, and among them was Mr. Frederic Egerton. This young man had been vacillating a little respecting his immediate departure from New Orleans. It had occurred to him that he had not yet seen enough of the singular forest around it, with its rich Palmetto shrubs, and its heavy pendent moss; and he had pretty well made up his mind to stay another week.

He was one of those who had been honoured by a verbal invitation from the honourable Judge Johnson himself, for the party of the evening; but he had prudently given an uncertain answer, and in truth had decided upon avoiding so warm a ceremony. But his curiosity was now piqued to know why that little obstinate, thorough-bred American girl, insisted so rudely and so vehemently, upon being accompanied by that deplorable-looking Miss Perkins.

"She has got some horribly vulgar American joke in her head, I am quite sure of it," he muttered to himself. "And if I am broiled for it, I will certainly go, in order to find out what it is. How I do detest American jokes!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE drawing-rooms of Mrs. Judge Johnson, like many others in New Orleans, were large, lofty, and handsome; and, on the present occasion, very tolerably lighted, so that Mrs. Allen Barnaby and her party felt, on entering them, all the delight of reviving hope for the future. The rooms were already very nearly full, Colonel and Mrs. Beauchamp being always very late, owing to the gentleman's evening nap, which nothing was ever permitted to interfere with. But this circumstance only added to the gratification of our party, proving to them at once, by one heart-cheering *coup-d'œil*, that they were, as Mrs. Allen Barnaby emphatically expressed it, "Once more in the land of the living."

"Isn't it a comfort, Patty," said she, making a sudden step forward, and clutching her daughter's arm, "isn't it a comfort to see

so many full-dressed people again? I swear that I dreamt half-a-dozen times at the very least, when I was aboard ship, that the devil, or something like him, came and told me I should never put my foot in a ball-room again. And you see that dreams do go by contraries. Isn't it delightful, Patty?"

"Lor, mamma, how you do pull me!" said Patty, in return, endeavouring to withdraw herself from the maternal grasp, in order not to be separated from her husband, who was drawing her forward. "Yes, yes, to be sure, it is very delightful—only let me go."

At this moment Mrs. Judge Johnson, a very thin lady of about five-and-thirty, came forward from the crowd that surrounded her, and to whom she was giving in the strictest confidence a few hints as to *who was coming*, with all the interesting particulars now attached to the names of Allen Barnaby.

The interest and curiosity thus excited, was of the most animating kind, and produced so evident a desire to behold the celebrated heroine of the tale, that Mrs. Allen Barnaby had the exquisite gratification of finding herself the object upon which every eye was fixed. Perhaps her heart had never beat so joyously since the moment of her first introduction to Lord Mucklebury! With the acuteness which made so remarkable a feature in her character, she saw at a single glance what was going on, and understood it, too, completely.

"Do you see, Donny?—do you see?" she whispered in the ear of her husband, on whose arm she was now stalking forward with indescribable dignity to receive the welcome of her hostess. "Don't they all look as if they were ready to worship me? I have not told you yet all that I have been hearing and saying about the niggers."

Mrs. Judge Johnson having now succeeded in getting within speaking distance of her illustrious guest, made a courtesy, at once becoming the dignity of a judge's lady and the cordial hospitality of a Louisianian patriot, upon receiving a lady about to write a book on the principles avowed by Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and which were already pretty generally known throughout the room.

"I can't be thankful enough, I'm sure, ma'am, to my obliging friend Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, for bringing me and the Judge acquainted with a European lady of your standing and great ability. There has been a great deal of ill-blood brewed, and evil seed sown between our two countries, by the vile abominable lies and slanders that some of your travelling authors have propagated against us; and to such a lady as you are, I expect this must be as hateful as it is to us. But if what we hear of you is true, ma'am, which we cannot doubt, seeing it comes from Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, of Big-Gang Bank, if all the good we hear of you is true, you shall find that we are not people to take up prejudices against all, for the faults and the crimes of some.

"You will find yourself as much honoured here, Mrs. Allen

Barnaby, as if you were a free-born citizen of our glorious soil. We have no prejudices against the English, notwithstanding all the ill they have done us. All we ask at their hands is a fair and honest account of the glories of our unrivalled government, and the splendour of our institutions, and this is just what we never get from them—for it is a common saying among us, that the bigness of their lies is in proportion to the littleness of their country. But by you, ma'am, we expect to be treated differently, and different, as you will find, will be the return. And this honourable gentleman is, I expect, the major, your husband. He is heartily welcome, ma'am, for your sake—and so are all the rest of the ladies and gentlemen, and would be if there was double the number. Just in time, too, here comes the honourable Judge Johnson, my husband. Judge, this is the lady from England, as we were talking of but now. You remember," and she whispered something in his ear. "And this is a major of England, her husband, and these are her sons and daughters, I believe, or her very particular friends; all come out to travel with her, and to help her, may be, in giving a fair and just account of us at last."

Mrs. Judge Johnson was one of those ladies who, when they begin a speech, never seem to know how to leave off again. It is probable she would not have ended here, had not the Judge began to speak himself; and whenever this happened, she immediately ceased—an example which it would be well if many ladies, of many countries, followed.

The Judge, however, had certainly a particularly good right to the privilege thus accorded him, because it was very rarely that in his own house he spoke at all. He was a senator, and in the chamber of the legislature was celebrated for his eloquence; but elsewhere, he was, generally speaking, a very silent man. He was one of those who had, with the utmost consistency of purpose and unvarying steadiness of principle, persevered in advocating the righteousness of the slavery system against all the attacks made upon it by those whose notions of freedom, as a national characteristic, were founded on rather a broader basis than his own. It was he who, with the most constantly sustained and most acrimonious vehemence had, through session after session, brow-beat, abused, and ridiculed the bold men who had ventured to attack this darling idol of the slave states; and he was revered accordingly by those who worshipped it.

This honourable gentleman almost rivalled his lady, though with fewer words, in expressing the height, length, and breadth of the affection and esteem which he ever held ready to bestow on all persons willing to come forward in support of what he was wont to call "**HIS PRINCIPLES.**"

Men of all lands, when they talk of their *principles*, generally look conscientious and sublime, and so did the honourable Judge Johnson. You might have thought, to look at him when he was haranguing on the immutable nature of right; of the heaven-born

holiness of justice ; of the sinful weakness of permitting vacillating laws, and untried innovations, to sap and undermine the venerable institutions of the republic, that it was a martyr who was preaching in support of a holy but painful doctrine, which none but the steadfastly pure and holy-minded had courage to defend. And, accordingly, he was universally characterised by every citizen who possessed a slave throughout the Union, "as one of the worthiest and most high-minded men that ever lived—as true as steel, and as honest as the day."

And those who hung all their hopes of continued prosperity upon the system he supported, might well speak thus of him—for if he was right there, he was wrong in nothing else, in nothing, at least, in which this *principle* was not so vitally mixed as to make part and parcel of the thing itself. He was himself a strict liver in all ways. But, if it chanced that any instances came before him of the licentious immorality which inevitably arises from the monstrous "*union in partition*" which this fearful system produces, his strict morality seemed to melt away, like wax before the sun, and till he was again heard to speak upon some theme where this did not interfere, the honourable Mr. Judge Johnson might be mistaken for the most licentious man alive.

Of all this, however, Major and Mrs. Allen Barnaby knew very little, and of course, cared considerably less. They were both all bows, amenity, and smiles. The lady moved her plumes, shook her perfumed locks, and declared that New Orleans seemed to her a perfect paradise.

"I had no idea of seeing such a room of elegant company as this. It almost perfectly equals anything in London. My own last party, to be sure, was more numerous, and as many of the ladies wore their court-dresses, because we were all at the drawing-room that morning—it was more——"

But, luckily, before she finished her sentence, a contracted brow or two among the group she was addressing, reminded her of the outbreak of her friend, Mrs. Beauchamp, when the court of Queen Victoria had been alluded to on a former occasion. Therefore, stopping suddenly short, she looked round her with a sort of renewed delight, and then exclaimed, with very captivating *naïveté*—

"But oh! Good gracious! What use is it to talk of London, or Paris, or any other place in the world! For where did any one ever see in the same number, so many beautiful, elegant-dressed women, or so many noble, dignified-looking men?"

"I am very glad to find you are struck with that, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby," said Mrs. Beauchamp, in an audible whisper, and throwing her handsome patriotic eyes over the group of tall republicans who, standing in a cluster behind the Judge, were gazing with very eager curiosity at the lady who, it was rumoured, was come all the way from the old country on purpose to do them justice, and to write about them and their nasty niggers in the proper style—"I am *very* glad you are struck with that," she

repeated with energy, "because in this part of the Union, we do rather pride ourselves upon the elegant style of our gentlemen. All the young ladies in the United States, you know, are counted pretty, some more, and some less, of course; but it is in vain to deny that it is only in the slave states that the gentlemen look first-rate. And the reason is so plain, if people would but give themselves the trouble to understand it! For it's only in the slave states, in course, that a citizen is a master as well as a man; and what right, I should like to know, have those Europeyans, who clamour against our negro slavery, to insist upon it, that American gentlemen shall be the only gentlemen in the world who can't say that much for themselves?"

A very audible murmur of applause ran round the circle which had now surrounded the strangers at this sally; and "devilish smart woman that!" was heard from various quarters.

Mr. Egerton, who had been in the room some time before the arrival of Mrs. Beauchamp's party, had by this time made his way up to it; an effort which he had probably been disposed to make, because the individuals composing it were the only ones in the room, save the honourable Judge Johnson himself, whom he knew by name, or with whom he had ever exchanged a syllable.

Mrs. Beauchamp, in her eagerness to perform properly all the duties of a chaperon to Mrs. Allen Barnaby, had dropped the arm of her daughter on entering the room, saying—

"You know everybody in the room, Annie, so you won't want me; but let who will come to you, be sure to keep civil with the English people."

Finding herself thus alone, Miss Beauchamp looked round her, before she took another step in advance; not so much, however, to see with whom she should join herself, as how most securely to avoid the proximity and conversation of Madame Tornorino, for whom she had conceived an aversion even greater than the fact of her being English could account for.

Having ascertained in what direction she and her loving husband had turned, she next looked about her for the other individuals of the party for whom her mother had requested her civility, and perceiving that the favoured Matilda had received permission to place the tips of her fingers on the gallant arm of Patty's Don, she looked about her, and for some time in vain, for the melancholy Louisa, and at last found her considerably in rear of the party—of course, utterly alone, and with an air as utterly desolate.

Annie instantly stepped back and joined her, offering her delicate arm, smiling exceedingly like an angel of light, and beginning to talk to her about the room and the people, as if they had been intimately acquainted for months. The sadness of the melancholy Louisa gave way before all this unlooked-for kindness, and being really as good-natured a woman as ever lived, she soon got talking and laughing with her young companion in a much gayer style than was quite usual with her; for even before she had been be-

guiled into leaving her country, the constant anxiety in which she lived respecting her sister's unpromising project of getting a husband, had rendered the life of Miss Louisa far from a happy one.

On perceiving the pleasant effect her attentions produced on the person whose quiet sadness had so moved her young heart to compassion, Annie redoubled her efforts to be amusing; and at the moment Mr. Egerton reached the place where she and Miss Louisa were standing, a little apart from the crowd that surrounded the great lion of the evening, Annie had made her companion laugh heartily, and was looking the very picture of gaiety and good-humour herself.

Mr. Egerton before he spoke to them, gazed at her for a moment in astonishment, and it might be, perhaps, a little in admiration. Miss Beauchamp was not on this occasion dressed in her robe of brown-holland; but as far as form went, was hardly less simply clad; and as the material was white muslin, without any mixture of colour or decoration of any kind, her appearance was still as remarkable for its quiet neatness as before. One ornament, however, she had, which was the full-blown flower of a snow-white Japonica, which she had fastened gracefully enough on one side of her head.

Having indulged, unseen, in looking at her for a minute or two, Mr. Egerton stepped forward and made himself visible, bowing civilly to the elder lady, and expressing his hope that he saw the younger well.

"Oh, dear! what a pity that Matilda is not here!" exclaimed the kind Louisa in her heart. "This is the very gentleman she was so anxious to be introduced to—and now he seems quite inclined to get acquainted!"

Her sister, however, was too far off to be summoned by any becks or winks that she could set in action, and all she could do was to return his civility in the most obliging manner, which she did by courtseying to him three times successively.

Miss Beauchamp, meanwhile, from the unexpected suddenness of Mr. Egerton's address, or from some other cause, perhaps her extreme dislike of him, coloured violently, but soon recovered both from the laughter he had interrupted, and the slight agitation he had produced. And then her manner became again as cold, as distant, and as disdainful as it had ever been when conversing with him. It is not very easy for a gentleman to keep up a conversation under such circumstances, especially when so large a portion of contempt and dislike mixes with his own feelings; but, with a sort of pertinacious obstinacy, Mr. Egerton was determined that he would talk to Miss Beauchamp. It might be that he hoped to plague her, or it might be that he hoped to amuse himself with her transatlantic idiom; but let the reason be what it might, he was very steadfast in his purpose, and on seeing the young people preparing to dance, actually proposed himself to her as a partner.

Annie looked at him with considerable surprise, and certainly

her first impulse was to decline the offered honour ; but she was very fond of dancing, and if she refused him she could not dance with another, without a degree of rudeness which nothing but a fresh outbreak on his part in praise of his own country could have given her a courage for. She therefore, after a little delay that was just long enough to be uncourteous, bowed her consent, and he presented his arm. She looked at him as American young ladies always do look on such occasions (before they have visited Europe), and walked on beside him in silence, but without accepting it. And hereupon Mr. Egerton passed judgment upon her with a spice of European injustice—for totally ignorant of the law which forbids young ladies to walk "*lock and lock*" with young gentlemen, he conceived her rejection of this ordinary piece of civility to be only an additional proof of her determination to be rude to him.

They had not, however, proceeded three steps in advance, before Annie, inexpressibly provoked at herself for her thoughtlessness, which really surprised as much as it vexed her, turned suddenly back again to poor Louisa, and kindly taking her hand, which she drew under her arm, she said—

"My dear Miss Perkins! I don't know what I was thinking of to leave you in this way. I expect you must think me the very rudest person you ever saw. Let me take you to your party before I begin dancing. Shall we look for your sister, or for Mrs. Allen Barnaby?"

"Thank you, my dear young lady! You are very—*very* kind to me—always," replied the really grateful Louisa. "If you can find out Mrs. Allen Barnaby for me, I shall be very glad, because, do you know, I should like to ask her if she thinks it would be possible to get a partner for my sister Matilda."

"Will it please you, Miss Perkins, if she gets a partner?" said Annie.

"Please me, my dear Miss Beauchamp? Oh, dear! oh, dear! I should be *so* delighted—I really can't tell you how delighted I should be."

"Then just stay here one moment, will you, with your countryman, Mr. Egerton? and I will see if I can manage it without troubling Mrs. Allen Barnaby."

And so saying, she glided away, leaving the not-too-well-matched compatriots side by side.

"You seem to have become already extremely intimate with that young American lady, Miss Perkins," said the gentleman. "Do you find her very agreeable?"

"I find her, sir, the very sweetest, kindest young creature I ever met with in my whole life," replied the grateful Louisa, with a degree of emotion that communicated itself to her voice. "I really do think that if I saw much of her I should grow to love her a great deal too well—she being an American foreigner, which would make it seem almost wrong and unnatural, I am afraid."

"Why, really, Miss Perkins, if you feel thus strongly already,

I should be apt to think that you might carry your partiality rather farther than was reasonable, for you can have seen but a very little of her."

"And that is quite true, sir, certainly—but very great sweetness, and very great kindness, will go to one's heart, I believe, without taking a great deal of time for it."

The handsome, gallant, gay young Egerton looked in the pale face of the still dismal-looking old maid, with a considerable approach towards good fellowship.

"Perhaps, Miss Perkins, you patronise pretty young ladies," said he, smiling. "And I won't deny that Miss Beauchamp is very pretty, though she is so thoroughly American."

"Pretty, sir? Is that all you can say? I do think she is the most perfect beauty that ever was looked at."

"Yes, yes," he replied, laughing, "she is quite sufficiently beautiful, and I see I was right in supposing that this is the reason you have taken such a fancy to her."

"Then, without wishing to be rude, sir," she replied, very earnestly, "instead of being right, I must tell you that you are quite wrong. I don't believe at all that I have any particular liking for beauty. There's my sister's particular friend, Miss Patty—Madame Tornorino, I mean—I have heard that she is considered quite a complete beauty, and I do assure you, sir, that since she has been fully grown up, I have sometimes taxed myself with being very ill-humoured and unamiable about it—for the handsomer she seemed to get, the more I seemed to dislike looking at her."

Again Mr. Egerton laughed, but by no means impertinently; and though he did not think it discreet to tell the lady how very well he understood and how very much he sympathised with her, he did offer her his arm to conduct her to a seat, saying, that he would watch for the return of Miss Beauchamp. But before Miss Louisa could express her sense of his obligingness, or do anything more than wish that it was her sister Matilda instead of herself that he was so polite to, Annie returned bringing the glad tidings that she had got one of the best partners in the room for Miss Matilda.

"And now tell me," she added, "where I shall leave you?"

"Oh! just there, if you please, my dear—where this gentleman was going to get me a seat before you came back."

"But shall you not like better to be with your party?" said Annie. "Mrs. Allen Barnaby has got all the grandeur of New Orleans round her. Should not you like to get a place near here? I am sure I can manage it."

"No, thank you, my dear," replied Miss Louisa, rather hastily. "I would a great deal rather sit here by myself, if you please."

Again Mr. Egerton felt a strong movement of sympathy towards the old maid, and it seemed as if he thought not of his

beautiful partner till he had conducted her to the seat she desired to occupy. Then, however, he returned with no very lingering step to the spot where he had left Annie conversing with some of her acquaintance, whom he heard entreating her, as he came up, to get them an introduction to the celebrated Mrs. Allen Barnaby.

By this time the gentlemen dancers were all leading their partners to their places, and Mr. Egerton perceived that the manner in which this ceremony was performed, was by the gentleman's taking the hand of the lady in the good old Sir Charles Grandison style, and so parading her to the place she was to occupy. They took their station at the side of the quadrille, which gave time for a little conversation before the figure of the dance called upon them to begin.

"Your antipathy towards the degenerated inhabitants of the old country, Miss Beauchamp, seems to have relaxed, in one instance at least. You are exceedingly kind and attentive to that poor unhappy-looking Miss Perkins."

"I don't think she is unhappy-looking at all," replied Annie, evasively. "Not, at least, when she has anything in the world to make her look cheerful. I never saw any one more easily pleased in my life."

"And you really appear to take pleasure in producing this metamorphosis from grave to gay," returned Mr. Egerton. "And I could understand this very well, if she were not an English-woman. But, as it is, I confess to you that I am somewhat puzzled to understand why you have so decidedly taken her into favour."

Annie looked at him for a moment as if doubtful how to answer, and then said, with a little air, as if she had at length made up her mind—

"I will tell you the reason, Mr. Egerton. Miss Perkins is the only person I have ever heard of (I will not say conversed with, though it would sound better—but I have scarcely conversed with any), Miss Perkins is the only English person I ever heard of, who did not think him or her self vastly superior to everybody else in the world. She, poor thing, is exactly the contrary, for she has every symptom of believing herself inferior to everybody, and that is the reason why I think her the most interesting individual of the English party at Mrs. Carmichael's."

"The English party at Mrs. Carmichael's," muttered Mr. Egerton to himself. And then he and his fair partner were called upon to perform their part in the dance.

Meanwhile the happiness of Miss Matilda was almost greater than anything she had ever dared again to hope for at a ball. When endeavouring to obtain a partner for her, Miss Beauchamp had not scrupled to hint that she was, as it were, part and parcel of that celebrated Mrs. Allen Barnaby, who was come from England to New Orleans on purpose to write a book in praise of the United States and in defence of the slave system. Not only was this

enough to procure the gentleman to whom it was addressed as a partner in the first quadrille, but no less than three others solicited the honour of her hand, before the first set was over, for the subsequent dances.

Those who know anything of Miss Matilda Perkins, can be at no loss to imagine her feelings. Nor was her friend and patroness less happy. Senators, members of congress, lawyers, writers, and statesmen, all crowded round her, and seemed to vie with each other in demonstrations of esteem and admiration. The heart of my heroine whispered to her—

“This is what I was born for. This is my real vocation.”

Her well-pleased husband lingered near her long enough to see how admirably well she bore her honours, and then giving her, unseen by all, one very little wink of satisfaction, turned away, confessing to the honourable Judge Johnson, who, at that moment, made the inquiry, “that he had no objection whatever to a rubber.”

The fair Patty was, in short, the only one of the party who did not think this visit very delightful; but being absolutely obliged to give up her husband to her papa, who had become so attached to him as to resolve upon never playing a game of cards of any kind without having him near his person, she found very little fun even in dancing, because, of course, now, as she rather pettishly muttered to herself, “Nobody could dare to make love to her for fear the Don should snap his nose off.”

Before she left the room, however, she, too, came in for a share of the honours of the evening; for a certain Mrs. General Gregory, a lady very richly dressed, and having every appearance of being a person of great consequence, made acquaintance with her by admiring her gown. This led to other subjects; and as Patty was not disposed to dance much, Mrs. General Gregory had so advanced the acquaintance before they parted, as to promise to come and call upon her and her mamma at the boarding-house. This greatly revived the spirits of Patty; for the lady talked of her carriage, and her horses, and her servants, and occasionally of the general, her husband, so that our young bride again felt that she too was somebody. But, after all, it was Mrs. Allen Barnaby herself who was in truth the well-head and spring of all these honours. She was herself fully aware of this, and enjoyed the glorious prospect opening before her with all the native energy of her character.

The last words she uttered to her husband before wishing him finally “good night,” will show the acuteness with which she read the causes that had produced such agreeable effects.

“I say, Donny—do you think I shall find a word or two to say in praise of slavery? Won’t I, my dear? That’s all.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE party at Judge Johnson's furnished a fund of conversation for the whole of Mrs. Carmichael's large domestic circle on the morrow ; and had not the heart of Mrs. Beauchamp been filled by higher considerations (for she had begun to feel a very strong conviction that she was likely to become the agent of a revolution in public opinion concerning the slave states of America, little less important than that achieved by the immortal Washington), she might have found considerable gratification to her national vanity in the cordial admiration expressed concerning everything and everybody there, by the English party whom she had introduced.

As it was, however, she was intent on higher thoughts, and did little more than smile and bow with contented urbanity, when Miss Matilda Perkins distinctly declared at breakfast, that, much as she had always enjoyed the first-rate society of London—"Curzon-street and all, you know, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby," she had never seen a more perfectly elegant company than those assembled at Judge Johnson's, "and as for the gentlemen," she added, blushing slightly, and fixing her eyes upon the smoking roll she was engaged in buttering, "I must say that there is a thorough fashionableness and gentility about them that I don't think at all common to be met with in the old world."

Not even the decisive and emphatic "very gentlemanlike men indeed," of Major Allen Barnaby, could do more than produce a repetition of the smile and the bow from Mrs. Beauchamp ; although the colonel, her husband, was moved thereby to open his eyes more fully than he had yet done that morning, and to reply, "I am glad to find, sir, that you are so thoroughly brought to that conviction at once, because it will prevent any acting of prejudice upon your mind as you go on progressing in your acquaintance with the country. I expect, sir, it was the luckiest thing you ever did, coming to this part of the Union in the first instance, for in no other direction, almost, could you have hoped to have fallen so completely with the right sort. You may depend upon it, Major Allen Barnaby, that the great proprietors in the slave-holding states of the Union, are the most perfect set of gentlemen upon God's earth."

But Mrs. Carmichael's breakfast-table was large enough to admit of more conversations than one being carried on at the same time, and this slow, solemn and deliberate speech of the colonel's did not at all interfere with what was passing at a little distance from him. For some reason or other, perhaps from remembering the success of Miss Beauchamp's efforts the evening before, to make the melancholy Miss Perkins look gay, Mr. Egerton, who had chanced to overtake the good spinster as she was descending the stairs, not only addressed her cheerfully as rather an intimate

acquaintance, but actually offered his arm to conduct her across the hall, and in this way they entered the breakfast-room together. The Beauchamp family had already taken their places, and Miss Louisa, strengthened in spirit by the civility of her young countryman, actually took courage, as she slipped her arm away from his, to approach, *avec intention*, towards a vacant chair next below that which her friend Annie occupied, and was rewarded for the courageous exploit by an extended hand, and a smile of very kind welcome. As a matter of course, Mr. Egerton followed the steps of the lady he had escorted, and there being fortunately a second chair to be had, below that of Miss Louisa, he had the satisfaction of being able to place himself in close juxta-position to her, and it soon became evident not only to her observant sister, but to every body else who happened to be looking that way, that the acquaintance between them was ripening into very considerable intimacy, for he talked to her a great deal; and because she talked to her neighbour on the other side, he began to talk to her too, notwithstanding his aversion to everything so completely American. But he felt, or was beginning to feel, that there would be something quite ridiculous in his fighting the battles of his country by being rude to a young girl, however "thoroughly American" she might be, and being once awakened to the absurdity of such a line of conduct, he took great care to avoid it.

Miss Matilda, meanwhile, having gazed for some moments on the very new and puzzling spectacle of her sister in the act of being gaily talked to, and gaily listening, at length hit upon a solution, which easily and rationally accounted for the unusual degree of attention she appeared to be receiving. Miss Matilda remembered how uncommonly well she herself had looked in her pale pink silk the evening before, and what unmistakable proof of this she had received in the marked attentions of no less than six American gentlemen who had asked her to dance.

"I understand it all perfectly," thought she. "This Mr. Egerton is just like all other Englishmen—so vastly fond of whatever they think is coming into fashion. I know well enough what will come next; Louisa will have to introduce me. But I can't say I care much about it just now. That Mr. Franklin Brown is worth a dozen of him any day; and as for that odious American girl! she just sees that it won't do to give herself airs to any of us. We are all getting too much into fashion for that to answer. Yes; I understand it all."

Mrs. Beauchamp had, with an air of decision that no boarding-school etiquettes could oppose, seated herself next Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and the acquaintance between these two distinguished women was advancing so rapidly towards the familiarity of friendship, that they conversed wholly and solely with each other, and that only in whispers, and when the table broke up, they left the room together, arm in arm.

Patty and her Don, seated as usual side by side, conversed also

in whispers ; but the happy bride condescended, from time to time, to interrupt this under colloquy by talking a little to the ladies named Hucks, and Grimes, concerning the last night's party, to which they had *not* been invited, and which, therefore, offered a theme particularly fertile, and to Patty, at least, particularly gratifying.

"But I wish you could tell me, Mrs. Grimes," said she, "something about that nice person, Mrs. General Gregory, as they call her. She was most uncommon civil to me, and is coming to call upon me this very day ; and I should like monstrously to know something about her first, that I mayn't make any horrid blunders you know, in talking to her."

"Oh my !" returned Mrs. Grimes, "a fine young lady like you needn't in no way be afraid of talking to Mrs. General Gregory, for she would be quite up to understanding everything you could say to her, if you was ten times over English, she is first-rate standing in all ways."

"Is she rich ?" asked Patty.

"Oh, goodness ! yes, to be sure she is," was the reply. "They have not a chick nor child belonging to them, and they say his plantation is next largest to Judge Johnson's in Carolina. But then, you know, in course, that she is one of the ladies of the new light, only she makes a difference from what the eastern new-lighters say, on some points, on account you know of the nigger population of Carolina."

This was by no means particularly intelligible to Madame Tornorino, and she immediately demanded, with her accustomed distinctness, when asking a question—

"Do you mean that she is a Methodist ?"

"She is one of the evangelical saints, ma'am," said Mrs. Hucks, in a tone that showed she held the persons she alluded to in great respect.

"Well, I don't care a farthing for that," replied Patty, "so as she don't wear a sanctified, frightful little bonnet, and a prim mouse-coloured gown ; and I am sure I saw no symptom of that last night, for she was beautifully dressed, and almost as fine as mamma."

"I don't know whether it is the same in the old country," resumed Mrs. Grimes, "but with us there is a great difference in the manner in which serious ladies fix themselves. Some dress just as you say about the bonnet and gown, and an't that far different from quakers, while there's others, like Mrs. General Gregory, who declare that they despise giving any attention at all to such contemptible distinctions, and say that there's no warrant for thinking that either bonnets or gowns make any difference in holiness."

"Oh ! well, that's all right," returned Patty, "for we should never get on if she didn't approve fashionable dress, I can tell her."

"Well, now, begging your pardon, ma'am," said Mrs. Grimes "that's more of an American lady's feeling than I ever expected to

hear from an English woman; for in course you know that the English have no great fame in the Union in the article of dress. All through the world, I take it, the Americans and the French stand highest in that article."

"I don't know anything about that," replied Patty, "I only know that I wish I had only just one hundredth part of the fine clothes I've seen in London: but I shall talk to Mrs. General Gregory about it, for I intend to be great friends with her."

A favourable opportunity for putting this resolution in action was afforded exactly at that hour of the day when it is considered to be most genteel to make morning visits at New Orleans. Mrs. Major Allen Barnaby and Madame Tornorino, were both asked for by the well appointed black footman who attended the carriage of Mrs. General Gregory, and Cleopatra, who answered the inquiry, having first shown the exquisitely dressed and highly respected visitor into the saloon, ran up the stairs to give notice to those two favoured ladies of the honour that awaited them. Mrs. Allen Barnaby was at that moment in the act of writing a very important sentence in her note-book, under the dictation of Mrs. Beauchamp, but hastily threw down her pencil the moment she heard the summons, and prepared to obey it.

"Oh no! for Heaven's sake, do not go now," cried Mrs. Beauchamp fervently. "The passage you are writing at this moment, my dearest Mrs. Allen Barnaby, may produce more effect from an English pen than anything that has been written for years. For pity's sake, don't go!"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby felt her own consequence at this moment with a thrill of delight that amply atoned to her for the loss of all the doubtful glories of Curzon-street; but being vastly too acute not to perceive the source of this dear new-born consequence, she at once decided upon hazarding the loss, or at any rate the delay, of the well-sounding new acquaintance in the drawing-room, and assuming a look and tone of enthusiasm, which might really have made her fortune on any stage, she replied, "Dream not of it, my invaluable friend! I am not blind to the value of every acquaintance in such a country as this; but there is that within my heart at this moment, which renders all ordinary intercourse insipid; I felt before I left my own dear, but most ill-informed country, that I was predestined, if I may so express myself, to the task of doing justice to this magnificent continent. It was an enormous sacrifice that I demanded of my high-born husband, and his only, his lovely, his newly-wedded child; but the especial gift that I have received from Heaven, my dearest Mrs. Beauchamp, is that I rarely speak in vain. I explained my views, my motives, my hopes! and you see the result. You see me arrived here from my splendid English home, surrounded, not by my own dear family only, but by valued friends, whom their many excellent qualities, as well as their large fortunes and distinguished birth, rendered important to us. This I

have done for the United States of glorious America, and I leave you to judge, dearest lady, whether I am likely to turn from such an occupation as that in which we are now engaged, for the sake of any visitor in the world !”

It must not be supposed that Cleopatra waited to listen to this long harangue ; on the contrary she did but deliver her message, and ran off again to repeat it to the “young madam,” as she called Patty, who had already received her assistance in making herself rather finer than usual, in preparation for the great lady who was now arrived. Being thus ready, and alone (for her Don was as usual with his respected father-in-law), and in fact waiting for the summons, Madame Tornorino lost not a moment in obeying it, and was most exceedingly well pleased to find that her mamma did not appear ; for she had often, of late, felt herself more thrown into the background than any married woman ought to be, by the overpowering claims of her female parent upon the eyes and ears of those around her, and she rejoiced to think that she should now have an opportunity of doing herself justice. Patty found her visitor seated in the middle of one of Mrs. Carmichael’s large sofas, as if fearful that want of space might injure the flowing pea-green satin in which she was dressed ; and when Madame Tornorino’s ungloved and rather large hand was held out to welcome her, Mrs. General Gregory received it with the tips of her pale kid fingers, with a great deal of refinement and good taste. But Mrs. General Gregory had once passed eight weeks in France, and since that period the whole powers of her mind had been divided between two objects ; the first of which was to be told by a few dearly beloved spiritual friends and advisers that she was fit to be a saint in heaven ; and the next, to understand from all the world that she was sure to be taken for a French woman on earth. Having reseated herself after the salutation of Madame Tornorino, smoothed the folds of her robe, and arranged the lace of her cloak, Mrs. General Gregory opened the conversation by inquiring if Madame Tornorino had as yet attached herself to any particular congregation in the Union.

Few young women of Patty’s age were better qualified to give an off-hand answer to a question not perfectly understood than herself ; a faculty partly perhaps inherited from her mother, who had passed great part of her life in acquiring the art of appearing to know many things of which she was profoundly ignorant ; but chiefly it was derived from an innate fund of original impudence, which gave her courage to dash at everything, confident alike in her own cleverness, which she felt made a good hit probable, and in her own audacity, which she also felt would render defeat indifferent. But in spite both of this moral and intellectual courage, the question of her new acquaintance startled her. In most of her previous adventures of this hit-and-miss kind with strangers, she had either caught a glimpse of their meaning, or fancied she had

done so ; but now she had not the very slightest idea of what was meant, and was in the greatest danger of being forced to say so, when her good genius came to her aid, and shaking back her heavy black ringlets, in the most unembarrassed manner possible, she said, "Why really, ma'am, we have had no time yet for anything."

"I am delighted to hear it, my dear madam," replied the elegant visitor ; "for in such a business as that to which I allude, nothing is so much to be avoided as rashness and over haste. To say the honest truth, indeed, I was a little in the hope that I might find it so, and nothing can more exactly convene to my wishes than that by thus early cultivating your acquaintance I may be the means of leading you in the right way."

What was poor Patty to say now? Clever creature! She only shook her ringlets again, and said, "I am sure you are very kind."

"I mean to be so, my dear young friend," replied the excellent Mrs. General Gregory, looking with great kindness upon the French embroidery of Patty's collar and cuffs, which was as quickly discerned to be such by her studious and learned eye, as the text of an Elzevir by the sharp ken of a scholar,—“I mean to be so. I am aware what the object of your admirable mother is in coming to this country, and I conceive it to be my bounden duty, knowing, as by grace and mercy I do, that I have made my own calling and election sure—I expect, my dear young lady, that it is neither more nor less, I say, than my commanded duty to do what I can towards helping others. And where—oh my!—where shall I find anybody so every manner worthy of being helped on towards the same election as a family to whom the whole Union is likely to be so deeply indebted as they are to be to yours?”

Patty began to see light. She had already heard an immense deal of talk (considering how short a time she had been in the country) upon ELECTIONS of all imaginable sorts and kinds. In a free country like America, everything is done by election, from choosing a president, to the appointing a pew-opener, and having listened with her usual sharpness to all this, she now became convinced that Mrs. General Gregory was going to propose her papa, or perhaps her own dear Don, for the stewardship of a ball, or a horse-race. Exceedingly delighted by this idea, Patty eagerly exclaimed—

"Dear me! how very kind and obliging—I don't think there is anything that we should all of us, from first to last, like so well."

"All? alas! my dear young lady, *all* is too extensive a word," replied Mrs. General Gregory ; "when you have reached my age," she added with a gentle smile, and still gentler sigh, "you will leave off including the gents so freely in such work as we are talking about. If you knew as well as I do, the often hardness of heart, and the frequent blindness of eyes in the unfeminine part of the

best society, you would quite altogether, I expect, leave off saying a word about *all*."

The mystification of poor Patty now returned upon her with threefold darkness, and feeling that she was sinking deeper and deeper, and might very likely get into a scrape at last, her indigenuous wit sprung up in another direction, and caused her to exclaim with an air of goodhumoured *naïveté*—

"I declare, my dear ma'am, I don't believe that I understand what you mean."

Mrs. General Gregory replied, first by looking earnestly and pitifully in her face for a few moments, and then by saying—

"Is it possible, my dear young lady, that by the ever-merciful but inscrutable interference of Providence, it falls to my happy lot to be the first that ever availed your dear precious young spirit of the necessity of calling together into families, the chosen of the Lord's people here on earth?"

"Why, really yes, ma'am," replied Patty, slightly yawning, "I can't say that in England I ever heard anything said about dividing ladies and gentlemen into families."

"Are they indeed so benighted, my dear young friend?" demanded Mrs. General Gregory, clasping her hands fervently together, and heaving a deep sigh; "then, indeed, it will be a privilege and very precious glory to have the task of awakening the soul of a young lady whose appearance is so every way interesting and approvable."

And here again, the general's lady, perhaps involuntarily, looked at the pretty new dress which Madame Tornorino had obtained at Howel and James's upon her papa's Curzon-street credit, a day or two before she left London.

"It will, indeed, be very precious to me, Madame Tornorino, my dear, to save so sweet a young brand from the burning!"

Now, here was sympathy, if ever it existed upon earth. Mrs. General Gregory looked at Patty's silk and embroidery, and preached to her about election, because she approved them; while Patty gazed upon Mrs. General Gregory's satin and lace, and patiently listened because she, too, approved.

From this point the conversation proceeded very amicably, the American lady judiciously mixing enough of worldly talk, to make her friendly overtures palatable to the as yet unregenerated neophyte, and the English one enduring the "monstrous bore" of her new friend's talk, for the sake of having a fine acquaintance that seemed to think her of almost as much consequence as her mamma.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It will not be irrelevant to this minute narrative of the Barnaby progress through the United States, to give a slight sketch of this new friend of Madame Tornorino, as it will help to explain the cause for which so sedate and elegant a personage as Mrs. General Gregory deemed it desirable to cultivate an intimacy with the young and blooming impudence of our Patty. She had, in truth, very strong reasons for it.

As no race is so sharp as that which goes neck and neck from the starting to the winning post, so no rivalry is so keen as that which, in like manner, exists between two persons nearly equal at all points. Between the ladies of the two great Carolinian planters, General Gregory and Colonel Beauchamp, there was at their country residence near neighbourhood and considerable intimacy: and there was also, both in country and in town, a pretty constant, but even civil struggle, for superiority, in consideration and (as the Transatlantics expressively term it) in *standing*. When, having both of them passed the age of forty, the two wealthy possessors of two of the finest plantations and two of the finest gangs of slaves in South Carolina, united themselves in holy wedlock with two of the most celebrated beauties of Baltimore, the young ladies were installed in their respective mansions with a degree of *first-rateness* that was very dangerously equal; for it instantly gave birth to a rivalry, which had lasted ever since.

The first atom of ground gained by either of these ladies in advance of the other, was on the part of Mrs. General Gregory, who unexpectedly announced, *un beau matin* to her friend and neighbour, that she had just completed an arrangement with one of the general's French correspondents (a wholesale coffee-dealer), for his despatching to her, twice every year, a box of millinery *direct from Paris*.

For a few months this blow was felt severely. It was vain that Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp appeared in the most elegant habiliments that Charlestown, New Orleans, Baltimore, or even New York itself could furnish; for it constantly happened upon her appearing before her neighbour with any article of dress which that lady had not before seen her wear, that an observation followed, accompanied with a multitude of obliging apologies, to the effect that she had that very morning received a letter direct, from her Paris milliner, to tell her that *that* particular article was completely out of fashion, and to warn her against any attempts on the part of the milliners of the United States, to pass such things off upon her as new.

It is necessary to know the sensitive delicacy of feeling on such points which prevails among ladies of high standing in America, in order to conceive the severity of the trial to which the temper of

Mrs. Beauchamp was exposed by this mode of proceeding. The first idea which occurred to her as suggesting the possibility of relief under it, was the opening a correspondence herself with a Parisian milliner; but unfortunately, Colonel Beauchamp's coffee was all consigned to Liverpool, and he had no French correspondent whatever—no, not even so much as at Havre—who might assist in favouring such a design. It was therefore after many vain attempts, finally abandoned, and the genius of Mrs. Beauchamp was called upon to devise some counter-current of superiority, which might enable her to shun the buffetings, and the bruises, which the high tide of her friend's good fortune had brought upon her.

Nor did the lady long meditate upon the subject in vain. She really was a clever woman, though on some particular subjects a little more vehement than reasonable; and upon everything relating to her "unequalled country," as she always called it, and everything connected with its constitution, laws, customs, and peculiarities, from an abhorrence of monarchy to an adoration of slavery inclusive, she not only was vehement both in feeling and expression, but would have considered it a very grievous sin to be otherwise.

People who, like Mrs. Beauchamp, think and speak, with more violence than profundity, are apt to attach value to their own powers of advocating whatever cause they espouse, and while the lady of Big-Gang Bank was meditating at what point her powers of intellect or of fortune might best enable her to outshine the lady of Rice-Lawn Paradise, a certain thought darted into her head, which, had she been desired to explain it she would probably have called "a patriotic inspiration."

She suddenly remembered how her father, of honoured and blessed memory, had ceased not, morning, noon, or night, as long as life had been lent him, to hold forth on the atrocious *dishonesty* and *injustice* (these specific accusations being the favourite stronghold of his clique) of all those who dared to impugn the holiness and the lawfulness of slavery. She remembered too, the love, the reverence, the gratitude, and the admiration with which he had ever been listened to by everybody, or at least by everybody whose love, reverence, gratitude, and admiration, she thought worth having; and from that moment of happy reminiscence, which occurred exactly three years after her marriage, down to the present hour, Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp had acquired the reputation of being the most thorough-going, out-and-out patriot, and right-down, first-rate smart woman in the Union.

The result of this very brilliant success was speedily seen and painfully felt by Mrs. General Gregory: but she, too, as it seemed, had some kind, guardian spirit that watched over her destiny.

Some of

The light militia of the lower sky—

who in all lands watch over the changeful little destinies of the

ladies, led her from Rice-Lawn Paradise to the city of Baltimore, precisely at the moment when it was

Glowing like furnace—

from end to end, with the burning eloquence of a multitude of itinerant preachers, assembled there from all parts of the country, for the purpose of celebrating that very singular transatlantic solemnity, called "a Revival."

The same guardian sylph who had guided her in this propitious hour to Baltimore, guided her likewise into a fashionable chapel, where a fashionable preacher was assuring a multitude of fashionable ladies, that without the grace and comfort which he, and a few of his particular friends and brethren alone could give, they must all fall headlong into the bottomless pit.

While listening to this much-admired gentleman, Mrs. General Gregory was greatly struck by the beautiful display of feeling with which many first-rate ladies came forward at his call, and placed themselves on "the anxious benches" set apart for all those who wished to distinguish themselves by such a fearless demonstration of piety as this act demanded. In truth, Mrs. General Gregory was like many other persons, *very much* struck by this edifying spectacle.

She, too, wished to be distinguished, having, as we know, very particular reasons for it; and here (most providentially displayed to her) was a mode by which this earnest wish might be at once obtained. During the few moments of hesitation which followed the conception of this happy idea, she overheard the following remarks from some of the most elegantly-dressed ladies in the chapel, who fortunately happened to be placed immediately before her.

"My!" exclaimed one of them, "if there isn't Mrs. Governor Robson going right away for the anxious bench! That will make a pretty considerable noise, won't it?"

"Noise? I expect so, my dear," was the reply; "and won't she," added the second speaker, "be more the thing than ever with all the highflyers! My! what a sight of parties she'll be giving this Revival, I'll engage for it; and what an unhandsome fix we should have got into, shouldn't we, if we had taken it into our heads to stay away? We should have got no invites, you may be availed of that, I expect."

All this was uttered with very little restraint as to the tone of voice, for the noise produced near the anxious benches by the exhortations or the comfortings of the preachers prevented anything uttered in any other part of the chapel from being heard, except by those very near the speaker. Every word, however, was distinctly heard by Mrs. General Gregory, and every word produced effect.

Before the same hour on the following day, she had been presented to the most celebrated of the reverend gentlemen who were at that time performing at Baltimore, and having with all due

ceremony declared herself desirous of becoming one of his congregation, she was installed as "a sister" accordingly—appeared on the anxious bench a few days afterwards, and being a lady of large fortune, and particularly desirous of becoming—

If not the first, in the very first line—

soon became spoken of in all directions as one of the most shining lights which had been for a long time added to the temple of the new Jerusalem.

For some time the excellent and exemplary Mrs. General Gregory had every possible reason to be satisfied with the effects of the course she had pursued; she became, in her turn, the centre of a circle, and felt herself fully as able to sustain a competition with Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp as she had ever been. But at length she had the sagacity to discover that "highly distinguished" as she was, Mrs. Beauchamp's essays on the righteousness of slavery were listened to with more *gusto* by their mutual acquaintance, than her own little sermonettes on the righteousness of the elect; nor did the cause of this long remain a mystery to her. She saw plainly, in short, that the magnates of South Carolina were more inclined to sympathise with her rival's enthusiasm than with her own; and from this time forward it would have been impossible for any one acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, not to have admired the skill with which she made head against the difficulties she encountered. Her conversation became a sort of curious mosaic, made up as it were with bits of black and white, and showed such a skilful mixture of Christian texts, with slave-holding principles, as could certainly be met with in no country of the world, save that of which she had the honour and happiness of being a citizen.

But it answered perfectly; and if Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp was known among the best society of the Union, as a right-down, first-rate patriot lady, Mrs. General Gregory was equally renowned as topmost among the right-thinking of the saintly party, who knew the duty they owed to the Stars and the Stripes too well not to make up their religious principles square with the same.

It may in some cases be true that the native *litterati* of America have no great reason to boast of the honours and profits accorded upon them in their own country, at least, before they have received the *timbre* bestowed upon them by the approbation of ours; but if they find readier and warmer welcome in other lands, the *litterati* of other lands, *en revanche*, find in the United States a warmer welcome, perhaps, than anywhere else; it being quite sufficient for an individual to carry the name of author there, in order to insure him a buzz of celebrity from one end of the country to the other.

No wonder, therefore, was it that Mrs. General Gregory, being in the position above described, should be desirous of sharing in the

great Barnaby intimacy enjoyed by Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp; and when she discovered, as she did at the party of Mrs. Judge Johnson, that besides the authorship, there was the still nearer and dearer claim to friendship, which Mrs. Barnaby's loudly proclaimed opinion on the *great African subject* gave her, there was nothing which she did not feel ready to do, and to say, in order to obtain a forward and conspicuous place in the good opinion of the family.

No sooner, however, had Madame Tornorino become fully aware of the strongly pious propensities of her visitor, than her ardour to cultivate the acquaintance relaxed; and it is probable that she would not long have delayed betraying some symptoms of this, had not Mrs. General Gregory, either from anticipating this very natural result, or from yielding to her own native propensities, suddenly "changed her hand," and led the discourse to gayer themes.

"But, oh my!" she exclaimed, with a pleasant little laugh, "I must not keep on talking for everlasting this way about chapel-going, and all that sort of thing, to a pretty young lady like you, Madame Tornorino, who in course must have your mind filled up as yet with plenty of other things—in part, you know, I mean, my dear—and that is all so very natural, that I can't say I realise its being anywise improper. You will be pleased to remember, my dear, that my carriage and servants, and myself, too, will be quite at your service, Madame Tornorini, whenever you like to declare your congregation—and I'll take you to the best seat in the chapel for seeing the company and the dresses, as well as for hearing that blessed vessel, Mr. Crawley, pour forth his balm: but if you like it better in the first place, I'll be delighted to take you with me, and your honourable mamma too, if she'll be pleased to go to a first-rate dancing-party to-morrow night, that the lady of our prime newspaper-writer of all this south part of the Union is going to give."

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Patty, cheerily. "I should like it best of anything; that is, if you are going to be so kind as to ask my husband, Don Tornorino, too?"

"Most certainly, my dear, I am. And will you go with me to chapel, next Sabbath?"

Patty paused for half a moment before she replied, and her answer showed that she was improving rapidly in wisdom of all sorts.

"Oh, dear! yes, certainly, ma'am. I suppose that is just the same as going to church in England, which is the best thing, I am sure, that one can do of a Sunday, because you know——"

It was lucky, perhaps, that Mrs. Gregory's general habit of making herself spokeswoman upon all religious subjects caused her to break in at this point upon Patty's speech, as it is possible that she might have completed it by adding—"there is no other place

full of people to go to ;" but when her new acquaintance did it for her, by saying—

"I do, indeed, my dear—I do know that no place, except the heaven of heavens its blessed self, can be so good for Christians to enter as the chapels and churches of the saints," Patty was discreet enough to answer—

"Oh, yes ; to be sure, ma'am, every one knows that of course ;" adding, however, for the sake of a little useful information, "but you don't seem to be too stiff to go to dances and parties, ma'am?"

"Goodness forbid, I should, my dear!" replied the general's lady. "I hold it to be exceedingly sinful to turn my back upon the weak and the sinning, just because I have made my own election sure. I am sorry and grieved to say that there are in the Union some professing Christians, and not a few, I am afraid, who act very differently. If you visit the eastern cities, you will find many such—but they are clearly benighted in their generation—and go about, it is dreadful to think of it, doing mischief instead of good ; for it is the very same people as turn their faces away from their white fellow-creatures, as if they were not good enough for them, that go communing with the very people that wear God's mark upon their skins. The black descendants of the wicked Cain, you know, my dear young lady, the horrid impure nigger slaves, that wear by nature the mark that ought to warn the people of God to turn away from them, and make them to labour from the rising up of the sun, even to the going down of the same, as the hand of the Lord points out.

"But we of the south, Madam Tornorino, I am happy and blessed to say, know better. You will never hear of such abominations among the educated and elegant gentry of the slave-holding states—we are quite altogether a different people and population, as I hope your dear mamma will make manifest. And as to not going to balls and parties, my dear, I should blush to show any such weakness."

This last sentence, as every last sentence ought to do, left so pleasant an impression upon the mind of the person to whom it was addressed, that she remembered nothing which preceded it with displeasure ; and when Mrs. General Gregory took her leave, Madame Tornorino was quite ready to declare that "though a bit of quiz in her talk now and then, she was upon the whole a most delightful woman, and that she should take good care to be very intimate with her."

CHAPTER XIX.

WHILE the visit of Mrs. General Gregory lasted, Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp continued in some sort to keep watch over Mrs. Allen Barnaby, for the idea of her leaving her note-book for the purpose of receiving the civilities of the general's lady, was very particularly disagreeable to the lady of the colonel, and she was determined not to quit her, till the danger was past. Nor was the keeping her, pen in hand, the only use which she made of this interval. She had pledged herself to several of the most important personages in the southern part of the Union that such a book should be written by her English friend on the country in general, and on the slaveholding states in particular, as had never yet appeared from the pen of any European traveller, and which would be calculated to do unspeakable good in every part of the world, as tending to put in a right point of view that which had hitherto been so repeatedly placed in a wrong one.

Having proclaimed this, and received in consequence of it the most cordial thanks, and the warmest eulogiums on her patriotic zeal, it was become a matter of great personal importance to Mrs. Beauchamp, that Mrs. Allen Barnaby should lose no time in giving proof unquestionable, and evidence as clear as light, that she, Mrs. Beauchamp, had in no way misrepresented or exaggerated either the purpose or the power of this distinguished traveller. With this object, she determined, if possible, to induce her immediately to produce a specimen, sufficient to prove; first, that she really was employed in writing on the subject; and secondly, that her manner of treating it was what she had declared it should be.

Hitherto all that Mrs. Allen Barnaby appeared to have done was the scribbling a few words, first on one page and then on another, of her new note-book. This had been performed in the presence of Mrs. Beauchamp; and though that well-educated lady felt that this was very likely to be the way in which books were really made, she felt that she should be better satisfied if she could see a sheet or two of full sized paper, written all over, and with a title at the beginning. This feeling, however, arose much less from any doubts she entertained respecting either the intentions or the capacity of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, than from an almost feverish impatience that the business should begin. Mrs. Beauchamp had a pretty considerable good opinion of her own ability, and she had no doubt whatever that if Mrs. Allen Barnaby would once set to work, there could be (as long as she continued near her) no doubt whatever of her producing precisely the sort of thing that was wished for. Hardly, therefore, had Cleopatra's step ceased to clatter on the stairs, when the lady of the colonel thus addressed the lady of the major—

"How thoroughly elegant and clever this is of you, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, thus to give up everything, as I may say, for your great work. But I promise you, my dear madam, that your light shall not be hid under a bushel, but shall blaze away before the judge, and before everybody else of the greatest real high-standing in New Orleans. They will one and all be ready to worship the ground you tread upon when I tell them, as I most certainly shall do, that you give up everything for the sake of progressing with your travels. You don't know, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, the prodigious fuss that the people will make about you, as you go on, if it is actually known for certain that you are positively employed upon such a work as we have been talking about."

"Known for certain, my dear friend?" returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with something like indignation in her tone; "do you mean to say that anybody doubts it?"

"I don't mean, I expect, to say anything that could hurt your feelings, dear lady," returned Mrs. Beauchamp, "but when you know our splendid national character better, you will understand the sort of fineness of intellect which always makes them doubt everything that they don't see with their eyes. And I must say that this, taken together with some other of their ways of going on, does make out upon the whole the most finished model of a perfect gentleman in the world. Because you see, my dear lady, that this doubtingness does not argue any want of trustfulness, which might seem suspicious and no way noble. But that's what nobody can say. For where is the nation to be found who gives and takes credit like the Americans? Oh, no! It is not for want of trust; for everything is done upon trust here, and if it was not it would never be done at all. But it is just about things where nothing is to be got by giving or taking credit that they are so particular; for then their fine national sense tells them, plain enough, that the best way to believe is to see."

"That is indeed a very fine trait to which you have just alluded," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, seizing her note-book, which for a moment she had laid aside, "that national habit of feeling confidence, and acting so completely as you say upon credit, ought to be dwelt upon, and must, I should think, my dear madam, have a very considerable effect upon my English readers; for in our country, as I have always understood, it is necessary to show a good deal of ready money before you can ever get credit at all. It really is a very fine national trait."

And Mrs. Allen Barnaby wrote several lines in her note-book.

"It is a fine national trait replied Mrs. Beauchamp, with great energy, and it is American all over. But, to come back, my dear lady, to what I was saying about our clear-headed citizens liking to see before they believe, it is quite beautiful, I expect, to observe how the two things unite and make one, as I may say, in the minds

of our patriots. And you, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, who are smart enough so clearly to comprehend these first-rate qualities, you would, I expect, be the very last to refuse compliance with the wishes of all the people of first standing in New Orleans at this moment present. You would not like to do that, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, I guess?—Say.”

“Not for the universe, my dearest friend!” exclaimed the authoress. “Tell me but what these patriotic gentlemen wish me to do, and I will do it instantly.”

“There is not a single one of them, my dear madam, but what shall be availed of your great obligingness,” returned her friend. “All that I wish you to do, my excellent lady, is just that you should write out a bit of a sort of introductory chapter, saying what you are going to do, and what you think of all you have seen as yet, and your principles and opinions about the slaves; and then write at the top of it the title in good large letters, that should look something like the beginning of a real book, and that, I guess, will be all they wish for just at present; and for this I won’t deny but what they are longing, one and all of them. They took care to avail me of that, I promise you, before I took leave of Mrs. Judge Johnson last night.”

There was something rather abruptly startling to Mrs. Allen Barnaby in this unexpected demand, but being a woman of nerve, instead of a nervous woman, she sustained the attack with great resolution, and after about a moment’s reflection, replied, smilingly, “You are aware, my dear friend, that the book in question is to be the history of my travels through your noble country. Do you think that as yet I have seen enough of it to venture upon writing anything?”

“Oh dear me, yes, my good lady, without any question of doubt you have,” replied Mrs. Beauchamp. “All that we ask for as yet, you know, is just what sort of feeling the first sight of the country produced; and your views, founded upon your own good sense, about the niggers; promising, you know, to study the question deeply as you progress, and then the title; and that’s just about all that we want for the present, so that a mere page or two of writing you see will do.”

“Then a page or two of writing shall be produced immediately,” replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby with decision. “But of course, you are aware, dear madam, that we authors always find it necessary to be alone when we write our books. It is always a terrible pain to part with you, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, but if I am to set about writing at once, I must have a minute or two to myself if you please, just to think about it.”

Mrs. Beauchamp herself seemed to consider that this was no more than reasonable, and hearing Mrs. General Gregory’s carriage drive away at that moment, she got up at once and left the room, saying as she went towards the door, “Oh my! how I do envy

you, Mrs. Allen Barnaby! Such a subject to be sure as you have got before you; and such kind and partial readers as you are like to find among us."

"Envy me, indeed!" muttered the over-hurried authoress, as the door was closed upon her; "what idiot fools they must all be to fancy that I have seen any wonders to write about in rather less than a week. The most wonderful thing I know about them is what I got from Donny, as to their every one of them being cheats, and that is curious enough to be sure, and might amuse the folks at home to know, if one did but dare to tell it. But this is all folly and nonsense, and as like as can be to quarrelling with one's bread and butter. If they were not the vain peacocks they are, how would my sitting down to write a book about them be so like as it is to make my fortune before it is half done?"

And soothed by this agreeable reflection, Mrs. Allen Barnaby really did set about her task in good earnest, settling her chair, placing a whole quire of paper before her, and fixing a steel pen to her fancy.

"Half done?" she repeated, with a little, quiet, solitary laugh. "Half a sheet will be enough to turn all their heads, and to bring them crawling on all fours to my feet, if I do but put in palaver enough."

And now the important business was actually begun, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby in turning over the first page of her book turned over a new page in her own history also; and she felt this—felt that her genius had now brought her to another epoch of her fate, and she doubted not but that she should date from it the growth and the ripening of honour, profit, and renown.

"What matters it," said she, renewing her soliloquy, "what matters it how or in what manner a book or anything else is managed, so that one gets just exactly the thing one wants by it? It would be just as easy for me to write all truth as all lies, about this queer place, and all these monstrous odd people, but wouldn't I be a fool if I did any such thing?—and is it one bit more trouble to write all these monstrous fine words, just like what I have read over and over again in novels,—is it one bit more trouble I should like to know, writing them all in one sense instead of the other?"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby suspended her soliloquy at this point, and began leisurely and critically to read what she had written. She smiled—as perhaps only authors smile, as she perused the sentences which she had composed.

"I always have succeeded in everything that I attempted to do," she said, with a feeling of triumphant confidence which made her grasp her pen firmly, and replenish it with ink as confidently as ever soldier drew his sword, or cocked his pistol; and again she wrote. Page after page became covered with the somewhat broad and square, but tolerably firm characters of her pen, till once again she stopped, took breath, and reasoned a little.

"Well, to be sure," thought she, "these American people do

seem to be out of luck, by their own account, in all the books that have been written about them. Poor souls! By what they say I suppose they have been pretty roughly drawn over the coals, by one and all of the author gentry that have set to work upon them; and then here come I, quite as well able to write a book as any of them, I fancy, and ready enough for my own particular reasons to praise them all, up to the very skies; and yet, somehow or other, I don't suppose that any living soul, but themselves, will believe there is a word of truth in it from beginning to end; and that I do call being monstrous unlucky. But what the deuce do I care for that? I have got an object, I suppose, and my business is to obtain it, without bothering my brains about who will or will not believe all the things that I choose to write down."

And now again Mrs. Allen Barnaby resumed her pen, and the colourless paper became rapidly tinted by her ink.

"It is a good thing, however," she resumed, "that it goes off so glib and easy as it seems to do. If I was always quite sure about the spelling of the words, I declare I think I should find it quite as easy as talking. I do wonder sometimes, where I got all my cleverness from. There isn't many, though I say it that shouldn't—but that's only when nobody hears me—there isn't many that could go on as I have done, from the very first almost that I remember anything, always getting on, and on, and on. There's a pretty tolerable difference, thank heaven! between what I am now with judges and members, and I don't know who all, smirking and speechifying to me, and what I was when my name was Martha Compton, without two decent gowns perhaps to my back, and not knowing where on earth to get another when they were gone! However," added the retrospective lady, smiling, as some comical recollection seemed to cross her mind, "I contrived to manage pretty well even then, and I shall contrive to manage pretty well now, too, or I'm greatly mistaken. There; that's enough for one bout," and so saying, the well pleased Mrs. Allen Barnaby laid the sheets she had filled, neatly together, and went to look at herself for a minute or two in the glass.

"Well," she murmured, again in soothing soliloquy, "if I don't look quite as young as I did when I was Martha Compton, I have gained in dignity quite as much as I've lost in beauty. I do look like a duchess, I'll be hanged if I don't—and I do believe in my conscience, that when I can get the things to put on, I dress as well as any woman that ever lived—I see nobody anywhere that looks as really stylish as I do, and just the sort of thing, I should think, for a fashionable authoress—no shyness, no stupid, awkward fear of anybody or anything. I certainly have, thank God! a great many advantages—and I may thank myself that I know how to make use of them."

In short, few authors ever rose from their first hour of literary labour better satisfied with themselves and their production, than

Mrs. Allen Barnaby. But she had still another hour of leisure before it was necessary for her to begin dressing for dinner, and for an evening party that was to follow after; Mrs. Carmichael having obligingly desired her boarders to invite any friends they liked, as she was going to have a *soirée* herself.

On looking at her watch, and perceiving that this unoccupied interval remained, Mrs. Allen Barnaby's first thought was to employ it by going to seek "Patty and the Perkinses," in order to indulge herself by vapouring a little about her new occupation; but a second thought brought with it a doubt as to how far any one of the three might be capable of appreciating the species of dignity which she was beginning very strongly to feel belonged to her, in her new character, and she therefore changed her purpose into the much more profitable one of sitting down again to her writing-table.

"I know a thing will put 'em all in a rapture of delight," thought Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as she again took up her pen. "I will just write down a list of questions for Mrs. Beauchamp, or her famous Judge Johnson to answer, and they will do double work, or I am greatly mistaken, for I will put them all upon thinking and saying that I am *so* clever, and *so* anxious for information! And at the same time it will give them exactly what they seem to love best in the world, and that is an opportunity of talking about themselves, and their country, and their glorious constitution."

She then took a fresh sheet of paper, and after a little reflection produced the following list of interrogatories:—

"In what manner does the republican form of government appear to affect the social habits of the people?"

"How far does the absence of a national form of worship produce the results anticipated from it?"

"At what degree of elevation may the education of the ladies of the Union be considered to stand, when compared to that received by the females of other countries?"

"In what manner was slavery originally instituted?"

"And what are its real effects both on the black and the white population?"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby almost laughed aloud with delight, when she had written the above; and in truth she had very sufficient reason to be contented with herself. A very few days had passed since the hour in which she had heard, for the first time in her life, any one of the above subjects alluded to; and had not the admirable quickness of her charming intellect enabled her to catch the very words which she had heard used by the distinguished patriots among whom she had so happily fallen, the writing the above pithy sentences would have been as completely out of her power as the inditing so much Greek. But never did any woman know better how to profit by opportunity than Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and great as was the elevation to which she now appeared likely to reach, it is impossible to deny that she deserved it.

She then began in excellent spirits the somewhat laborious but always delightful labours of the toilet, with a heart as gay, and an eye very nearly as bright, as when she had dressed to meet Lord Mucklebury at her first Cheltenham ball. In truth, everything seemed to favour her projects, and assure her the most unqualified success. The party about to assemble that evening, in Mrs. Carmichael's ample saloon, was likely to be very miscellaneous, inasmuch as every boarder had the privilege of giving invitations, as freely as Mrs. Carmichael herself, an arrangement which could not fail of bringing together exactly such a mixture of "all sorts of men," as it would be most desirable for her to "gain golden opinions" from. And golden, or at any rate, silver opinions, she was determined to make them.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby was still in the act of adoring—

With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers—

when the major entered. He was immediately struck by the general brightness and animation of her aspect, and exclaimed—

"Heyday, my Barnaby!—what has happened now? If there were any Lady Susans here, I should say that some of them had been making some charming proposal for taking you to court again. Upon my soul, my dear, you look as if you had been eating live birds, and that their bright little eyes were looking out, through your own. Who have you seen?—what have you been doing?"

And though the major as he spoke began steadily enough the business of refreshing his dress, he continued to keep his eyes fixed upon his ample spouse, with a good deal of curiosity, and it may be, with a little admiration.

"Who have I seen, and what have I been doing?" repeated his lady, with a very benignant smile; "as to seeing, Mr. Major, I have seen little or nothing—except, indeed, that everlasting Mrs. Beauchamp. But as to doing—it is not my place to talk about that, Donny, dear. I will just leave you to form your own judgment on the subject; upon my word, we have neither of us any time to talk about it now! for I'm not half done yet; and as for you, your beard is as long as Aaron's, major, though I know you mowed it only yesterday, but that comes of the climate, you know; so set to, there's a good man; and in the course of the evening I will see if I cannot indulge you, my dear, with a little insight into what I have done, am doing, and may be about to do."

"Well, I must consent, I suppose, to live in the dark, my dear, till it shall be your will and pleasure to grant me light," returned her amiable husband; and while the dressing lasted, nothing further passed between them on the subject of Mrs. Allen Barnaby's occupations, except a few mystic, and perfectly unintelligible words, uttered from time to time, by the lady herself.

CHAPTER XX.

THE evening party at Mrs. Carmichael's was a very large one—much larger, as that panting and blowing lady assured the company, than she had at all expected; adding, however, that if they could all make themselves comfortable, she should be right down glad they were all come—though for sure and certain she did not expect the one-half so many.

Neither the invited nor the inviters, however, appeared at all offended by these hints, and tea, coffee, lemonade, and whisky drinking, went on very prosperously. At length, Mrs. Beauchamp (who, in answer to a question gently asked, had learnt from her friend, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that she had no objection whatever to her mentioning the fact of her having actually begun her work), addressing herself particularly to that portion of the company which crowded round herself and her splendid English friend, said—

“I have the greatest of pleasure in informing the honourable Judge Johnson, his lady, General Gregory, Mrs. General Gregory, and in short all the friends that are interested in the news, that our talented English lady friend, Mrs. Major Allen Barnaby has done—commenced her elegant and handsome work upon the land of the Stars and the Stripes; and I am not that much doubtful of her kindness, but what I think there is pretty considerable good hope that if the honourable Judge Johnson would make the request to the lady, she would favour the company by reading up a little of it for their advantage, and that Mrs. Major Allen Barnaby would be clever enough to sit down straight away at once, and give us the pleasure and improvement we wish for, by making us acquainted with what she has done.”

This harangue was received by a murmur of applause that evidently proceeded, not only from that portion of the company particularly addressed, but from every quarter of the room; and when the buzz this produced had a little subsided, the honourable Judge Johnson replied—

“We cannot by many degrees thank you enough, my excellent Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, for the service which your truly patriotic conduct has conferred upon us all. But in the name not only of the present company, but of every part of the Union (except, indeed, that unhappy portion of it which refuses to rejoice in the greatest blessing left to us by the mighty Washington, and sanctified, as I may say, by the holy memory of the immortal Jefferson—I mean, of course, the misguided states who refuse to possess the blessing of a slave), in the name of the present company, and of all the soundly patriotic portion of the Union, I beg to thank your admirable friend for the very noble effort she is making in the cause of truth and impartiality—and I beg to say that one and all

of us, neither can, nor do desire anything better than just to sit ourselves down round about the lady, so that we may not lose a single one of the precious words which she is going to have the elegant cleverness to read to us."

The consequence of this speech from the richest man in the room was an immediate drawing together of the company round Mrs. Allan Barnaby, while several of the gentlemen began actively to move forward a table, a chair, and a footstool, for the authoress; and when she had placed herself, which she did with great stateliness and dignity, every one present got as near to her as was conveniently possible, every sofa and every chair being put in requisition, and made to approach the end of the room, whence the attraction emanated.

The honourable Judge Johnson himself sat at her right hand, and her deeply interested friend, Mrs. Beauchamp, at her left. Miss Matilda Perkins, who had found out a new way of making herself interesting and agreeable to the many tall, beautiful-looking American gentlemen who still continued to take so much delightful notice of her, ceased not, in the very central place which she had chosen, to indulge in the most expressive dumb-show demonstrations of love and admiration for the authoress, assuring several in whispers breathed into their eagerly presented ears, that her dearest of all dear friends, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, was certainly sent by Providence to speak of that unequalled country called the United States of America in the manner it deserved, for that there never was, no never, such a woman for talents and learning of all sorts; her crowning phrase being at the end of every whisper, "Oh! Madame de Stale was nothing to her!"

The quiet Miss Louisa, only too happy in being permitted to have a place by her friend Annie, sat at an open window at some distance from the more crowded part of the room, while Mr. Egerton, who now paid her quite attention enough to have convinced her sister, had she been its object, that he was only waiting for a favourable opportunity of declaring himself her lover, stationed himself at a convenient point for speaking either to her, or her "*thoroughly American*" companion, if he wished it, without the necessity to do it so loudly as to attract the attention of others.

The major, who was exceedingly amused, and also exceedingly well pleased by the apparent success of this new exhibition of his wife's cleverness, had placed himself very much at his ease on one of the sofas that was too large and heavy to be moved, but from whence he had a full view of her, and of all her goings on, and being well aware of the audibility of her voice, he had no fear but that he should hear every word she spoke.

Patty, who was still too much in love to think it much worth while to listen to anything but her husband, having entered the room when it was full, employed some time in a very active search for him, and at length discovered that her beloved Don was fast

asleep under an orange tree on the balcony. But as none of her pinches and twitches sufficed to awaken him, she at length determined to leave him at peace, and placed herself next to her beautifully-dressed friend, Mrs. General Gregory, finding a great relief in an accurate examination of all she wore, whenever it happened that her mamma's eloquence was particularly overpowering.

The movement, and the bustle, and the whisper, and the buzz, which of necessity precedes the calm required for such a business as that now going on, being at length over, the honourable Judge Johnson said aloud, and very distinctly, "Now then, my dear lady, we all trust and hope that you are ready to begin."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby bowed with grace and dignity to the gentleman who thus addressed her, shook a lavender-water odour from her pocket-handkerchief, pushed back with the tips of her left-hand fingers the abounding curls from her forehead, and with those of her right, lightly passed over the page that lay on the table before her, to restore its level smoothness, and then began:—

" JUSTICE DONE AT LAST ;

OR,

THE TRAVELS OF MRS. MAJOR ALLEN BARNABY

THROUGH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

Having pronounced this title in a voice clear, distinct, and very sufficiently loud, the lady paused for a moment to let the applause she expected, and which failed not to come, pass away. Mr. Egerton, whose eyes had been fixed on the authoress as she read it, turned, perhaps involuntarily, to the face of Annie afterwards. It might be that he expected to see her look exceedingly delighted at the prospect thus held out of praise and honour to be conferred on her beloved country ; but if so, he was disappointed, for the fair face of the young lady was tinted with a blush that looked much more like the glow of anger or of shame than of pleasure ; and as her eye met his, she turned from him with a frown of displeasure, which he could not help thinking was exceedingly undeserved, he never having taken any such liberty as that which now seemed to displease her in his life. He consoled himself, however, by remembering how excessively absurd it would be, should he try to persuade himself that he cared a straw whether an American miss smiled or frowned upon him. So he did but smile in return for her frown, and again fixed his eyes on Mrs. Allen Barnaby.

The applause created by her title being over, and expectant silence restored, that lady again took her manuscript from the table, where she had replaced it, while slightly agitating her handkerchief, and gracefully acknowledging the plaudits of the company by her smiles and bows, and thus resumed :—

" In giving to the world the following narrative of my travels through that most glorious country known by the name of the

United States of America, my principal object is to wipe away from the minds of my readers every trace of all that they have ever read or heard upon that subject before ; for till this has been done it is vain to hope that the multitude of important facts with which I have been fortunate enough to become acquainted, can be received as they ought to be. Nobody properly qualified to write upon this wonderful country could behold a single town, a single street, a single house, a single individual of it, for just one single half-hour, without feeling all over to his very heart convinced, that not all the countries of the old world put together are worthy to compare, in any one respect, from the very greatest to the very least, with the free-born, the free-bred, the immortal, and ten hundred thousand times more glorious country, generally called that of the ' Stars and the Stripes ! ' The country of the Stars and the Stripes is, in fact, and beyond all reach of contradiction, the finest country in the whole world, and the simple truth is, that nobody who really knows anything about it, can ever think of calling it anything else. It is just the biggest and the best, and that is saying everything in two words."

"Admirable!" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, raising her fine eyes towards heaven, and then pressing her pocket-handkerchief to them, in a manner that plainly showed the profound sensibility with which she listened to praise so justly due, and so warmly uttered upon the merits of her beloved country. "Oh, it is admirable!"

"Admirable? It is first-rate, ma'am," said the honourable Judge Johnson, warmly. "I expect, madam," he added, turning towards Mrs. Allen Barnaby, "I expect that nobody has yet come among us so elegantly well qualified as yourself for doing the justice that you promise us. I do not mean to speak alone of your particular great talents and beautiful accomplishments in writing, but I guess that it is because you have moved in the very highest of circles yourself that you are more up to the comprehending and admiring everything you have found here, than any of the low, whipper-snapper people as have come before you. That is what I guess to be the reason and true cause of the difference."

"You do me but justice, my dear sir," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with an air that might justly be called majestically modest, "you do me but justice in supposing that I am, rather-out-of-the-common-way capable of appreciating what is noble and superior. Heaven knows that I have no very great liking or partiality to the ways and manners of my own country ; but yet in justice to myself I think it but right to mention that my very last visit in London was to the drawing-room of the Queen. I must beg and entreat that I may not be misunderstood in saying this, and that none of this charming company will suppose for an instant that I think overmuch about queens and kings, and those sort of people. Nobody, I am sure, can be farther from it than I am ; but neverthe-

less, I just mention this to prove that the honourable Judge Johnson is right, and quite correct in what he has been pleased to say about my being capable of judging; and I do believe most truly that the reason why so much, as I am told, has been said about the backwardness in elegance of this most great and glorious country is, that all the people who have come over here before are of an inferior class, and not used so much to the very first circles, as I confess I have been."

"Then the murder's out, and that's the truth of it," exclaimed Colonel Wingrove, a member of congress and a man of fashion, who was one of Mrs. Carmichael's boarders. "All I wanted was to hear some of the English confess it themselves, for it is exactly what I have said a thousand and a thousand times; and it is astonishing to me that common-sense has not pointed that out to everybody, long and long ago. For doesn't it stand to reason that we know what we are our own selves? Who is there, I should alike to be told, so capable of judging what our manners are, as the first-rate educated among ourselves? And yet people among us, as ought to know better, are for ever fretting and fuming because half-a-dozen vulgar low-borns, who never knew the elegant luxury of owning a score of slaves to wait upon 'em, have come and gone without having the wit to find out what we really are. For my part, I snap my fingers at them all," continued the gallant colonel, suiting the action to the word, "and so I ever have done. But that's no hindrance to my feeling a true respect for the real lady that is come amongst us now; and I beg pardon for interrupting her so long; and beg to conclude by saying that she may count upon being valued and approved as she deserves to be, for there is not a people upon the whole earth that knows more thoroughly what's what than the citizens of the United States."

Here Colonel Wingrove ceased speaking, and expectorated, while the honourable Judge Johnson bowed to him with the condescension of a man who knows himself to be the first person in the company.

"What you have spoken, Colonel Wingrove, sir, is of a piece with the good sense which we all know you give out in congress, and which is just what in course we all expect from you. But now it strikes me that it is time for Mrs. Allen Barnaby to begin again; though it may be that she would find a drink of lemonade preferable in the first instance; for this glorious fine climate of ours is most times found rather over hot by strangers from northernmost countries, especially if, as in the present case, they happen to be in a room full of company."

Mrs. Carmichael immediately obeyed this hint by clapping her hands; upon which Cleopatra and her younger sister Cloe, who were both in waiting on the outside of the open door, started forward, and lemonade and whisky were very liberally handed round to the numerous circle.

"Now then, honoured madam," said the judge, "may we take the liberty of asking you to progress in your agreeable reading?"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby bowed, and immediately proceeded.

"If there is one point that is calculated to strike a reasonable stranger, altogether free from vulgar prejudice, more strongly than any other, at first arriving in this favoured and immortal country, it certainly is the contemplation of the comfort and happiness arising from the institution of slavery."

"God bless my soul!" cried Colonel Beauchamp, roused from his usual apathetic indolence by these stirring words, "that's one of the finest sentences that I ever listened to, either in or out of congress, and I don't care who hears me say it."

"Nobody can hear you say it, sir," remarked the mild-looking George Gregory, "without agreeing in your judgment; unless indeed we were so unhappy as to have among us some desperately malignant Pennsylvanian, or canting Bostonian, or the like, traitors to their country and to common-sense. None other can fail to agree with you in thinking that the last passage read to us by this truly superior lady is a proof of the greatest triumph of sound judgment over canting prejudice (coming as it does from an Englishwoman) that has perhaps ever been met with. And deeply indeed, madam, ought we to value it, for seldom is it, I grieve to say, that any writers whatever, except among the poor persecuted planters themselves, are ever found to have honest courage enough to speak out boldly *in print* in favour of this truly Roman and magnificent institution. But there is one word, one little word, my dear lady, that it will be necessary to insert before your admirable work is sent to the press. Will you give me leave to suggest it?"

"There is nothing, sir," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with mingled gentleness and dignity, "there is nothing for which I should feel myself so deeply grateful as for any suggestions, whether in the way of additions or alterations, to this work, which perhaps I have been only too eager to begin. I am well aware that I must in all probability appear hasty; but my earnest wish——"

"Not a bit, not a bit too hasty, madam," exclaimed the honourable Judge Johnson, interrupting her. "I honour you for your eagerness, madam; and it is never too soon to begin doing what is right. As to suggestions now and then, in the way of addition, you are much too smart a lady not to feel the advantage of it; but I protest that in the way of alteration I don't see the slightest chance of its being called for, or in any way necessary. All we have ever asked of those who came over to enjoy our good things, and take a spice, as I may say, of the elegance and luxury in which we live, all we ask of them is, that when they sit down after going back, to write a book about what they have seen, they should just speak the truth, without fear or favour, and say honestly that the United States of America stand just first and foremost, and highest and noblest, among all the nations of the earth. That's

all we want or wish for, from any author, male or female, gentle or simple; and by all I can understand from what this excellent good lady has read to us, of her commencement," he added, looking round upon the listening circle, "this is pretty much the upshot of what she means to report herself."

"Upon my word, sir," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a very amiable smile, "I do not and cannot see how it is possible, setting aside, of course, all sorts of wicked prejudice, envy, and the like, I really do not see how it is possible to say anything else."

"I wish it was possible for me to say, madam, that there were many such ladies in the world as you are," replied the judge. "I reckon that in that case we wouldn't care no more for the boundary question than for a flea-bite; and for that matter, indeed, if just that much was granted us—the slavery boggle, you know, of course included—I really and truly don't think that the right of search itself would be thought any great deal of long. But now let us hear what it was that General Gregory was meaning by his alteration?"

"Hardly an alteration, judge, hardly an alteration," returned the bland old gentleman; "what I ask for is merely the insertion of a word or two. When the lady speaks of the agreeable impression which the sight of slavery makes on superior-minded people on their first arriving in the United States, she must, I think, so far particularise as to make it clear that she speaks of the feelings which would arise in case the stranger should be fortunate enough to come, as the lady herself did, to a slave-holding state in the first instance; for if, instead of that, the person arriving was to make their first acquaintance with the Union at Boston, now, for instance, it is likely enough that they would never dream of such a thing as slavery at all, and then in course it follows that they could not admire it."

"I understand, sir, I understand perfectly," said the intelligent Mrs. Allen Barnaby, "you are quite right! The sentence as it now stands is exceedingly imperfect, but if any gentleman will be good enough to lend me a pencil for a moment I will correct it."

A most surprising number of pencils and pencil-cases seemed to spring, as it were, almost spontaneously from the waistcoat-pockets of the surrounding gentlemen. On seeing which the authoress threw around her a smile most safely circular, and took with admirable tact the pencil that was nearest. Well, indeed, might it have been said of her on this occasion—

"Oft she rejects, but never once offends"—

for among all the pencil-holders who had to return their unaccepted offerings to the receptacles from whence they were drawn, not one of them, so admirable had been Mrs. Allen Barnaby's manner of getting out of the scrape, felt in the slightest degree offended.

It took, of course, a few minutes to reconstruct the defective

sentence, and during this interval there was scarcely a gentleman present who did not raise his voice to join in what might truly have been called a chorus of praise and admiration. Mrs. Allen Barnaby heard, and wrote, and smiled, and wrote again; and much sooner than under these fluttering and flattering circumstances could have been expected, she once more pushed back her curls, and prepared to read. In a moment every other voice was hushed, and she thus resumed:—

“If there is one point that is calculated to strike a reasonable stranger, altogether free from vulgar prejudice, and arriving for the first time in that most highly-favoured portion of the United States distinguished by the high privilege which was sanctioned by the immortal Washington, and by the illustrious Jefferson approved”—(a splendid phrase that she had written down from the lips of Mrs. Beauchamp)—“it certainly is the contemplation of the comfort and happiness arising from the institution of slavery.”

“Now then,” said the still wide-awake Colonel Beauchamp, “now then, I think, madam, that you might challenge all the authors that ever wrote, to show a sentence more full of truth and wisdom than that is. I am sure, madam, we can never thank you enough; and I, for one, beg to say that as long as it is suitable to your convenience and pleasure to continue in the Union, my house and home shall be open to you and yours, and that nothing that I and my family can do, shall be wanting to make you feel yourself as if you were a real born American.”

A vast number of voices immediately reiterated nearly the same words; and while this was going on, Mr. Egerton once more ventured to look in the face of Annie. It was, however, no longer a frown that he met there, neither did any angry glow remain upon her brow. She was, indeed, on the contrary, unusually pale, and he fancied, although she did not raise her eyes, that there were tears in them, for their long dark lashes hung heavily, like the fringe of a cypress-branch besprinkled with dew, upon her alabaster cheek. But although Annie did not raise her eyes when the young Englishman turned to look at her, it is possible that she was conscious of his doing so; for in the next moment she had risen from her chair, glided over the space which divided her from the window, and stepped through it upon the balcony.

Not many men of any age can see a very beautiful young girl in tears without experiencing some kindly softening of the heart towards them; but at three or four and twenty, this sort of softness is usually too powerful in its influence to permit, for the moment at least, the continuance of any harsh or hostile feeling; and certainly Mr. Egerton just then quite forgot the perfect Americanism of Annie Beauchamp. But what was stranger still, though he very greatly wished to follow her, he had not the courage or confidence to do it; but though, upon reaching the balcony, she contrived so to place herself as not to be

seen by either him or any one else in the room, he was so much occupied by the image of her pale, sad, lovely face as she went out, that he lost whatever advantage of any kind might have been gained by attending to what was going on in the saloon; for he did not distinctly hear another word.

Pleasantly conscious as Mrs. Allen Barnaby was of her great powers, as well in her new occupation of writing a book, as in everything else, she had nevertheless found, after the first sentence or two, that the putting together the fine phrases which have been given above, was likely to be a very great bore; and, to say the truth, when she left off it was because she really did not know what she should say next. It was then that the happy idea of writing down a few questions, to be answered either by her inspiring muse, Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, or by some one else of the high-standers whose favour she was so anxious to propitiate, occurred to her. And now it stood her in excellent good stead: for when, upon the subsiding of the burst of grateful and hospitable feeling just described, the honourable Judge Johnson raised his voice to request that she would continue, instead of having to make the blank reply of—

"Sir, I have got no more," she was able to answer, in a tone, that instead of damping, very greatly increased the interest she had already awakened—

"Now then, my most kind and indulgent hearers," she said, "I have a great, a very great favour to ask of you," and Mrs. Allen Barnaby drew forth, from amidst the papers which she had placed upon the table, the sheet upon which she had written her "questions."

"I have here," she resumed, "put down one or two inquiries which strike me as being very important, and in which I hope and trust my excellent friends here assembled will be kind enough to give me some information."

"Assuredly, madam, assuredly!" answered three or four voices at once. "Please to read the inquiries, madam, only please to read them, that's all."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby obeyed, and in her most sonorous and impressive accents read—

"In what manner does the republican form of government appear to affect the social habits of the people?"

It was her intention to have gone through her whole string of questions before she paused to invite discussion on them. But this was impossible. You might have fancied yourself in the chamber of congress at Washington, so eager did every honourable member appear to speak on the subject now offered for discussion. But by force of lungs, and the impetus given to his determination to be heard, by the consciousness that he was the richest man in the company, it was the honourable Judge Johnson who finally succeeded in becoming spokesman on the occasion.

"In what manner? Gracious heaven! my dearest lady, in every manner! The republican form of government is just all in all; without it, you may take my word for it, we should not be a bit better, or a bit wiser, or a bit more advanced than other people. It is the republican form of government that makes us the citizens, the statesmen, the philosophers, and the rich men that we are. It is to the republican form of government that we owe our immense superiority in all ways; it is that which makes us such fathers and husbands as we are. It is that which makes us feared abroad, and adored at home; and, to end all, it is that which makes us great; it is that which makes us glorious: in one word, it is that which makes us the greatest nation upon the earth, and it is that which will keep us so."

While this was spoken, Mrs. Allen Barnaby sat the very picture of mute and earnest attention. Her ear seemed to gather the sounds she heard, as a miser might gather gold; and her mind, showing itself through her intelligent eye, appeared already setting to work, in order to form it into implements both of use and ornament, such as might be scattered over the whole earth, sure to become the most precious treasures of every land they reached.

When at length the judge stopped to take breath, the listening lady rose from her seat, and, laying her hand upon her breast, said, in a manner that very greatly touched her hearers—

"Never can the impressive words I have now heard escape from my memory! It was my intention to have written down whatever information I might have been happy enough to obtain in reply to my questions—but for this one, the answer is engraven HERE."

It is hardly necessary to narrate how these words were received. Cold indeed must be the heart that cannot imagine it! When tranquillity was again restored, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, who had re-seated herself, during the moments wherein she had yielded herself as it were, to applause, once more took up her paper and read—

"How far does the absence of a national form of worship produce the results anticipated from it?"

"Oh, that's answered in half a word, madam," resumed the judge, who seemed to consider himself the chairman of the committee, sitting to decide upon the lady's questions. "It just answers as we intended—and that's enough. We knew beforehand that it would never do for such a people as us to be schooling of one another for everlasting about forms and doctrines, and the old one knows what. You may just set down on that bit of the constitution, that it works perfect. And now, if you please, you may go on to the next."

"At what degree of elevation may the education of the ladies of the Union be considered to stand, when compared to that received by the females of other countries?"

"Oh, my!"

"Well, now!"

"Isn't that capital?"

"I expect that one and all we ladies must answer that for ourselves," were words, which, like winged messengers seemed flying round Mrs. Allen Barnaby in all directions; but happily in a tone which showed that if the ladies *were* called upon to speak for themselves, it was a call to which they should have no objection to answer.

"You may say that, ladies!" said Colonel Wingrove, gaily and politely winking at the most eager speakers; "nobody can answer that question, I expect, as well as your own pretty selves. But if I was obliged to say my say on the subject, I know that it would just be to declare, that the gals of the Union beat all creation—not in any wise to mention all the other women in it; and that they do, out and out, and out again, ten millions of times over, in every sort of learning and gentility, as much as they do in beauty."

This gallant speech was received with a regular clapping of hands from all the gentlemen present, while the "gals" simpered and tittered, and smirked, and brought their heads together in little whispering knots, till at length one very young lady's voice was distinctly heard to say—

"Well, now, I do hope that she will write down that exactly, without changing a word."

"And so I will, my dear young lady," cried Mrs. Allen Barnaby, affectionately; "and my heart dilates with pleasure as I look around me, and think of the happy chance by which I have been called upon to do justice to such lovely and elegant creatures as I see here!"

"Very prettily said, ma'am," said General Gregory, with his usual kind smile; "and I must observe that we have a right, too, to talk of our own good fortune, that has brought us so altogether genteel and understanding a lady to write about us as yourself."

"There is nobody to be found, I expect, general, who will be ready to gainsay that word," said the honourable Judge Johnson. "And now I shall give my vote and interest for our being all silent while this excellent lady goes on with her questions. Now then, ma'am, we are all mum."

"I have but one, or rather I should say that I have but two questions more on my list at present," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby. "I say two, because I perceive that I have divided the subject under two distinct heads; but, if you will give me leave, I will read them both together, as being too intimately connected for division; and if I mistake not, gentlemen, you will feel the subject to be one of very great importance, and of a nature to require the very best and most correct information before I can venture to write upon it—

“‘In what manner was slavery originally instituted? And what are its real effects, both on the white and the black population?’”

Scarcely had Mrs. Allen Barnaby pronounced the words, when so many voices were raised to answer her, that for some minutes nothing could be heard distinctly.

“This will never do, gentlemen,” cried the judge, raising his powerful voice to its very highest pitch, “we are one and all interested in this question, or the devil’s in it. But if you all keep on jabbering together at this infernal rate, just like so many wild geese, when they are settling down upon a common, I should like to know how the lady is to understand rightly a single word you say? I don’t want, or wish, to put myself forward, excepting in fit time and season; but I expect there is no one here that will attempt to deny that the advocacy of my principles upon this subject in congress has done something towards startling the New Englanders off from their infernal abolition nonsense; and if so, I think it is but fair to give me a try, as to whether I can’t startle the Old Englanders a little too. What d’ye say, gentlemen? Are you willing to let me answer the lady, or are you not?”

However much many of the individuals present might have desired to hear themselves speak a little on this very favourite theme, a very decided majority made it understood that they were willing to accept the honourable Judge Johnson as their substitute; and no sooner was this made perfectly clear and silence obtained, than the judge rose up, and putting himself in the attitude in which he always addressed the members of congress, he thus spoke:—

“As to the first member of your requirement, my good lady, I will just take the liberty of saying that you may go to your Bible for an answer. And if you don’t exactly know where to look for it, there is that excellent pious Christian, the lady of General Gregory, will show you; for she has got it all at her fingers’ ends about Cain being turned black by the hand of the Lord, on purpose that he might become the father of a nation of blackymore nigger slaves: and that’s the top and head of the institution, as I take it. However, I will leave that part of the subject to her, because it is well known to everybody in our part of the country that there is no one, be he priest, parson, or prelate, that understands it better. But I will take upon me, in my own person, to make a reply to the other portion of your inquiry, that being altogether in my own way, and touching direct upon points whereon my principles have been pretty generally received in congress, as standard principles of the wealthiest, the most enlightened, and in all ways the most important, portion of the Union.”

The honourable judge here paused for a moment, spit, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, and then proceeded—

“As to the effect of slavery upon the white part of the population, as that is the way in which you have been pleased to put your question, my good lady, whereas we should say, as to its effect upon

the *masters*, it is altogether a matter too clear to admit of any mistake.

"In the first place, it makes the only real gentlemen in the Union. In the second place, it saves the finest people upon God's earth from the abominable degradation of having no servants, proper and fitting, as regular servants, to wait upon them. Thirdly, slavery is known on all sides to be the only way in which the glorious fine sun and soil of this noblest of all countries, can be turned to the best account. Fourthly, there is no other way that man can invest, by which such fortunes can be made in the Union, as may enable some among the free-born of our glorious citizens and immortal republic to keep up the credit of the country, both at home and abroad, in such a way as to give us proper dignity in the eyes of Europe. And now, madam, I will leave off speaking upon this head for the present, because I calculate that I have said about as much as you will be able to remember at one go; but I have got not less than fifty-seven reasons altogether, which I can bring forward, when you are ready for them, to support my principles, but with which I will not now charge your memory, in the fear that you might not remember them all clearly. But this signifies the less, because it is proper, madam, that you keep in mind the necessity of coming again upon this part of your subject, it being greatly beyond all comparison the most important of all. As to your question, about the niggers themselves, poor filthy varment, it is vastly easy to answer it. Just state, if you please, my good lady (saying, as you safely may, that it is upon the best possible authority), just state that if, for many excellent reasons, the gentlemen planters had not thought it advisable to take these poor wretches under their protection by making regular lawful slaves of them, so that they cannot, luckily for them, get away,—if it was not for this, you will be pleased to say, that it is satisfactorily proved by all the philosophers as have examined the subject, that they would, beyond all question, in a very few years be found running about in the forests on all-fours, just like any other beasts—unless, indeed, as some think would have been the case, they would come to an end by eating one another up. This, my dear lady, is what we have saved them from, and this is what ought to be put forward before the eyes of all Europe."

"AND SO IT SHALL, SIR," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, again rising, with an air of indescribable dignity. "Blind, indeed, must those be who cannot see the light, when it is thus admirably put before them!"

"Madam! you are a thorough lady!" replied the judge, with a low bow. "And now I put the question, whether we should not be the better for a little more of good Mrs. Carmichael's lemonade for the ladies, and whisky for the gentlemen? And then, to my judgment, it would be most convenient that we should not remain much longer—there being much desirability in our taking ourselves off before this good lady shall have lost out of her head all that I have been endeavouring to put in it."

CHAPTER XXI.

BEFORE twelve o'clock next day, Mrs. Allen Barnaby had received fifteen notes of invitation for herself, her family, and friends. Some of these were for dinner and evening parties at New Orleans, and some for visits of longer duration, which the distinguished travellers were entreated to make at the hospitable dwellings of the writers, during the progress of their proposed tour. To copy all these documents is unnecessary, as the same hospitable and patriotic spirit appeared to pervade them all; but one or two ought to be given, in justice to the eloquence with which these feelings were expressed. The following are selected without the slightest partiality of any kind, except what arises from feeling that they are peculiarly well calculated to serve as specimens of the whole:—

No. I.

"MADAM,—Much has been said, a great deal too much, upon the deficiency of mutual good-liking between the great and glorious Union of America and the Islands of Great Britain. You, madam, shall prove, in your own person, that, as far as the noble-hearted citizens of the United States are concerned, the charge is altogether false and unfounded. Mrs. Major Wigs and myself desire the pleasure and satisfaction—You may observe as a national trait, if you please, madam, that in addressing the natives of Great Britain, the citizens of the United States never talk of 'doing honour,' and that sort of nonsense, and when you, madam, have seen a little more of them, you will become aware (for your capacity is already proved to be of the best) that they don't stand in a situation for any mortal creature on God's earth to do them an honour. But to return to business, Major Wigs and his lady hereby request the pleasure of your company, together with your husband, in course, and all your travelling companions inclusive, to a ball and supper at their house and plantation called the Levée Lodge, just two miles off New Orleans, this day week.

"I remain, madam,

"With the utmost of respect

"For your individual elegance of mind,

"CORNELIUS ALEXANDER WIGS."

No. II.

"MUCH ESTEEMED LADY,—After what was read and heard in Mrs. Carmichael's keeping-room last night, I expect it is not very needful for me to say why it is that I and my lady, Mrs. Colonel Staggers, desire your further acquaintance—we being amongst those who, acting in conformity with all reasonable laws, human

and divine, do the best that in us lies, as in duty bound, to uphold and support the greatly misunderstood and much wrongly abused institution of slavery. You will understand, therefore, madam, without more said, why it comes that we so entirely approbate the superior elegance of the literature which was displayed to us last night. And this brings me to the point and purpose of this present writing, which is to give you an invitation, and your good family all of them with you, to a grand dinner party which it is my intention to give in your favour on the 19th inst., at five o'clock P.M.

"I am, respected lady,

"Your literary admirer,

"MICHAEL ANGELO JEFFERSON STAGGERS."

No. III.

"The honourable Mrs. Secretary Vondonderhofs presents her gratified compliments to the highly-gifted and superior-minded Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and, in conjunction with her husband, the honourable Mr. Secretary Vondonderhofs, requests the pleasure of Mrs. Allen Barnaby's favouring company, together with that of the party supposed to belong to her, to an evening *soirée*, when the honourable Mrs. Secretary Vondonderhofs will have the advantage of presenting Mrs. Allen Barnaby to a great number of her friends of the most first-rate standing and consideration, which she flatters herself may be a gratification and every way an advantage to Mrs. Allen Barnaby. The evening fixed for the honourable Mrs. Secretary Vondonderhofs's *soirée* is next Monday week."

No. IV.

"MADAM,—Your purpose is as noble as are the talents which heaven appears to have given you for the means of effecting it. I respect you as you deserve, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and in saying this it seems, madam, to me, that I say everything. Myself and Mrs. Governor Tapway will consider it as a pleasure to receive you at our plantation-mansion on the banks of Crocodile Creek, for as long a time as you and your friends can make it convenient to bide with us; my wish being to show, for the assistance of your writing, that any unagreeable feelings which may have been seen visible in the United States of North America, towards those that come travelling and spying from the old country, have arisen wholly and altogether from the too certain fact of knowing that we were going to be faulted and abused; whereas you, madam, being altogether upon a new lay in the descriptive line, may look in like manner of novelty altogether for a different style of conduct on our part; and I

have no doubt but that you and yours will be satisfied with the same.

“I remain, madam,

“Your true admirer

“And sincere success wisher,

“STEPHEN ORLANDO BONES TAPWAY.”

Besides these, which I have taken the trouble to transcribe on account of their peculiar graces of style, Mrs. Allen Barnaby received no less than eleven other letters in the course of the morning which followed the triumphant exhibition of her powers as an author, all of them bearing the strongest testimonies of admiration and esteem, and all conveying very earnest invitations of one sort or another, both to herself and the ladies and gentlemen in her train.

On receiving the first of these very gratifying testimonials, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, her cheek flushed, and her eyes sparkling with all sorts of gratified feelings, rose hastily from the easy-chair in her own apartment, in which she chanced to be reposing when it arrived, and was just going to look for her daughter and “the Perkinses,” in order to share her pleasure and her triumph with them, when a second was delivered to her by the grinning Cleopatra. She returned, of course, to her chair, that she might peruse it undisturbed, and then her purpose changed, and it was to Mrs. Beauchamp that she determined first to display these trophies of success. Again, therefore, she stepped forward, and again her steps were arrested by Cleopatra, who now brought no less than three letters in her hand at once; and so struck was the black messenger herself at this extraordinary influx of despatches, that having laid down the three letters, she stood stock still in front of the table, to see how the English lady looked while she was a reading of them. But Mrs. Allen Barnaby was by this time in a frame of mind which rendered such examination extremely annoying to her, and raising her voice and her hand so as to command both respect and obedience, she said—

“Leave me, girl! Leave me, I tell you! Leave me instantly!”

Poor Cleopatra liked not the voice much, but she liked the hand less still; for not having the slightest doubt but that it was to be employed in the way in which raised hands always are employed towards people of her complexion in Louisiana, she actually quivered from top to toe, for Mrs. Allen Barnaby’s hand was not a small one. Uttering therefore only the monosyllable “OH!” in reply, she left the room much more rapidly than she entered it, and the lady was left in her secret bower to enjoy unlooked at, and alone, all the delicious triumph of that happy hour.

She read and re-read the five notes, which now lay all opened wide upon the table before her, and then she sat for a few moments in motionless and silent reverie. At length, however, her features relaxed into a smile, and she exclaimed aloud—

"I wonder what would happen if I were to take into my head to make myself a queen? I wonder whether anybody, or anything, would be found able to stop me? I'll be hanged if I believe there would. However, I don't mean to try my hand at it just at present, because I don't believe I could enjoy it more if I was ten times a queen than I do now, seeing all those people who own themselves that they have always hated us English like poison, seeing them all ready to fall down and worship me, just because it came into my head to think that I should find it answer to make myself popular! And answer it does, or the deuce is in it. Why, we might one and all of us live at free quarters for a twelvemonth at this rate; and I shall take care to make the Perkinses understand that they are to pay *me* if they pay nobody else. That is but fair and honest. And if they don't plague me in any way I will let them have a good bargain. What will the major say to me, I wonder, now?"

And here Mrs. Allen Barnaby almost laughed aloud in her exceeding glee. But she was not left long to enjoy in tranquillity this first full evidence of her complete success, for another slave, and not the terrified Cleopatra, soon entered her room, and deposited three more notes before her; and again, after another short interval, the same black girl returned, her enormous eyes grown more enormous still by wondering at the business she was about, and laid down four more, and in less than five minutes after, she entered with three, thus completing the fifteen, which seemed to terminate the embassies for the time being.

To say that Mrs. Allen Barnaby felt and looked delighted as she thus sat surrounded by these white-winged messengers of fame, would be an expression so pitifully and unsatisfactorily weak, that I forbear to use it. But where may I look for words capable of expressing aptly and fully the state of mind into which she was thrown by this enthusiastic outpouring of patriotic gratitude? Look where I will, I shall find none such. It is in fact impossible for any faculty, or faculties, save imagination alone, to do justice to her emotions, and to the imagination of my readers I resign the task, though only too well aware that of these, not above one in five hundred can be expected to possess the faculty in sufficient vigour to do justice to the image I have suggested.

Never, in truth, was there a mind more calculated to enjoy such success than that of my heroine. There are many who, though they may relish fame with tolerable keenness in general, would feel no great exaltation of spirit at this species of it in particular. But Mrs. Allen Barnaby was not one of these. Neither could she, notwithstanding her well satisfied contemplations on her past life, be classed with those so *blasés* with distinction and renown, as to make the receiving it a matter of indifference. Nor did the shower of happiness which so delightfully bathed her spirit in this hour of joy, bring empty praise alone; on the contrary, a vast deal of very solid-seeming pudding appeared coming with it; and in short, Mrs.

Allen Barnaby felt her contentment to be so measureless, and so greatly too big for utterance, that she suddenly determined not to mention what had happened to any one till she had first enjoyed it for a little while in secret, and till she felt capable of conversing upon it with less external emotion than she was at present conscious must betray itself were she to enter upon the subject immediately with any one—unless, indeed, it were her lawful husband and partner of her greatness.

"I will lie down!" she murmured to herself, as she passed her pocket-handkerchief across her forehead, "I will darken the room and lie down."

She fastened the blinds, and drew the window curtains accordingly; and then, having laid aside a considerable portion of her apparel, she crept within her mosquito-net, and laid her throbbing head upon her pillow. There is something in the climate of New Orleans which tends so strongly to induce sleep, that probably no degree of happiness could enable any person long to resist it if they indulged in the attitude which Mrs. Allen Barnaby had now taken. Certain it is that many minutes had not elapsed after my heroine had disposed of herself in the manner I have described before her eyes closed, and her regular but heavy breathing proclaimed aloud that she slept. But oh! what a sleep was that! and how far unlike the dull oblivion that falls upon ordinary spirits while the "sweet restorer" is doing his work upon them! No sooner had she forgotten herself, as the common and unphilosophical phrase expresses it—no sooner had she forgotten herself, than a power nobler than memory took its place. Mrs. Allen Barnaby did *not* forget herself, though it was less by memory than by prophecy, that she became in sleep the subject of her own high imaginings. It was probably from the more than common intensity of the emotions which produced these sleeping visions, that she at once gave birth to them in words, and with perfect distinctness exclaimed—

"Pray, move out of the way, Louisa! Do you not see how all those good people are straining and striving to get a glimpse of me? Matilda! it is quite ill-natured to keep standing so exactly before me. It is quite contrary to my temper and disposition to torment people so. Oh yes, certainly," she continued, varying her tone, as if speaking courteously to some stranger, "yes, certainly, my lord. If you will just push that golden inkstand a little nearer to me I will give you an autograph immediately."

For a moment or two she was silent, and then, turning as it were impatiently on her bed, she resumed, in accents less bland—

"It is nonsense, Donny, to think of it. It is not *you* who have written all these books; and if, as you all justly enough say, a title must and will be given, as in the case of Sir Walter and Sir Edward, it cannot be given to *you*. No, Donny, no. It must and will be given to *ME*. Yes, yes; hush, hush, hush. I know it, I know it. I know perfectly well, Major Allen, without your telling

me, that no ladies ever are made baronets. I know I can't be Sir Martha, foolish man, quite as well as you do, and I know a little better, perhaps, that *you* will never be Sir anything. But if my country wishes to reward me by a title, to which I should have no objection whatever, if such be the will of my sovereign, if that, as you all seem to suppose, should really be the case, I see neither difficulty nor objection in it. Why should I not be called Lady Martha?" and then she murmured on till her voice sank into silence, and herself into sounder sleep, "Lady Martha Allen Barnaby—Lady Martha Allen Barnaby—Lady Allen Martha Bar——"

It was clearly evident that my heroine had positively exhausted herself by the vehemence of her emotions, even in sleep, for she now snored heavily for above two hours, without again moving a limb, and on awakening, experienced that feeling of puzzle and confusion of intellect which often follows sleep that has been unusually profound.

"Where am I?" she exclaimed, starting up, and looking very wildly round her. But most sweet was the return of consciousness which followed. She saw the mass of open notes all lying together upon her table. "Is it, then, possible?" she exclaimed; "is it indeed true, and not merely the invention of a dream? Am I really at this moment the most distinguished person in New Orleans? And what may I not hope for hereafter? But, mercy on me! I really must keep myself quiet, or I shall certainly go distracted."

The resolution was a wise one, and kept to better than might have been expected from the very animated and excitable nature of Mrs. Allen Barnaby. She looked at her watch, and perceived that it was fully time to begin preparing her dress for dinner, and she set about this necessary business with a deliberate steadiness, which showed her determined to keep herself and her nerves quiet and composed. The result of this was all that she herself wished it should be. Her ringlets, her rouge, her flowers, and her bows, all took their respective places, without any trace of that confusion of arrangement which might reasonably enough have been feared under the existing circumstances. Before her dress had received its last finishing touch, by the arrangement of her white blonde scarf, she heard the approaching step of the major, and smiled, but very sedately, as she cast her eyes upon the letter-covered table.

"Pour out some water for me, there's a good soul," said the unconscious husband of the most distinguished person in New Orleans; "I'm devilish late, I believe."

"There is no occasion to put yourself into such a prodigious bustle, if you are," returned his lady, with an air of very elegant languor. "The dinner must be kept back a little if we are not ready for it."

"Keep back! Keep back the dinner at an American boarding-house! I should have thought, my dear, that you had been here

quite long enough to know that wouldn't answer. Did you ever see any one of them waited for half a second, even among the oldest customers, like the Beauchamps, or any of them?"

"I beg your pardon, major, but I cannot exactly think it the same thing. Nobody, I imagine, would like to sit down till—till *we* were ready."

The major opened his eyes, but was too busy in adjusting his cravat to remove them from the looking-glass, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby was really too much afraid of shaking her equanimity to trust her voice in explanation. But when, his hasty reparation of himself being completed, he turned about and looked towards his wife, who had quietly seated herself at the table, he perceived the large number of open letters with which it was covered, and immediately uttered the expected question—

"What in the world are all those letters, wife?"

"You may read them, Major Allen Barnaby, if you wish it," she meekly replied, while quietly employing herself in securing the clasp of her waist-ribbon.

The major, accepting the permission thus given, immediately set himself to the task of examination, but had proceeded but a very little way in it, when he gaily exclaimed—

"Well done, my Barnaby! Egad, we are afloat now, or the devil's in it."

And assuring himself by a hasty glance through the remainder that they were all in the same agreeable strain, he actually walked round the table and kissed the illustrious fair one to whom they were addressed, taking the greatest care, however, to disturb neither her ringlets nor her rouge.

"I am proud of you, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, I am, upon my soul," he said; "and what, think you, my dear, will be the best way to profit by all this? Why, here are no less than nine invitations for staying visits at different country-seats. If we could but find out, wife, who amongst them enjoys a little piquet, you know, like Colonel Beauchamp, and who does not, we could manage our matters famously. It would be fun, wouldn't it, to be going from house to house, treated and feasted! you writing your immortal books, and I raking in dollars every night of my life, and our own money lying snug all the time? It would be famous fun, wouldn't it?"

"Why, certainly the mode of life as you sketch it, major, would be pleasant enough, and profitable too, I dare say," replied his lady, "if we mind our hits properly. It will be exceedingly necessary, however, to find out who's who, and what's what, before we decide upon what to accept and what to refuse. I have said to all that I would send an answer, and this will give us a little time for inquiry."

"You are a jewel!" exclaimed the major, with a burst of really passionate admiration. "But there goes the bell, my darling.

After dinner you must write me down the names of all these excellent people, that I may learn what I can about them. And you may keep the letters, you know, and ask a few questions of Mrs. Beauchamp, or anybody else who can answer them."

"I shall not be idle, my dear," replied his wife, with a composed and quiet smile, which proved to her acute husband that she was not quite in her usual state of mind; but he was at that moment inclined to think that all moods became her, and taking his arm within hers, he led her with a very decided feeling of triumph, to the dinner-table.

CHAPTER XXII.

THERE was a something in Mrs. Allen Barnaby's demeanour as she entered the dining-room, supported on the arm of her husband, which both attracted the attention of her particular friends among the company assembled there and puzzled them.

"Was she ill?" "Was she affronted at somebody or something?" "Had she received disagreeable tidings from home?" or "was she only very much fatigued?" All and each of these motives suggested themselves to all those sufficiently interested in this lady to watch her as she entered the room, despite the interesting nature of the business already going on at the top of the table, where Mrs. Carmichael, puffing and wheezing like a fainting steam-engine, was sending round by the sable hands of two negro Hebes, sharply scrutinised portions of a favourite fish. The equality or inequality of this nice and difficult distribution was, under ordinary circumstances, a matter of great moment, and nearly of universal interest; but now it was only partially so. Yet it would be difficult to describe precisely what it was in the bearing of Mrs. Allen Barnaby which caused this effect. She always walked in with a great deal of dignity, and so she did now. She had always some volant ribbon or floating scarf to attend to and arrange; and so she had now. She never failed to return with great benignity any salutations which she might receive as she moved onward to her place; nor did she fail to do so now. But in all this there was something that nobody had ever seen before; a blending of condescension and indifference; an eye that seemed not fully conscious of the identity of the objects over which it glanced an air of superiority softened by benevolence; and, finally, a look of gentle tenderness when she turned towards her husband, that seemed to indicate that she recognised in him a being who in some degree at least approached to an equality of condition with herself.

Having reached the chair now constantly reserved for her next her friend Mrs. Beauchamp, she placed herself in it with a sort of circular bow that seemed to say, "Pray do not disturb yourselves;" but not even to that favoured lady did she give more than half a smile, and half a nod, accompanied with a languid look and drooping eyelid that seemed to speak exhaustion and fatigue.

"Oh my!" exclaimed her observant friend, "if you an't regularly done up, Mrs. Allen Barnaby! God bless your dear heart! You have just been working too hard, that's quite plain and clear, and that won't do at all. We shall have you ill, by-and-by, if we don't take care, and then what is to come of our delightful tour? Take my advice, and desire your husband, the major, to send you a glass of his wine. Though I am sure, for the matter of that, Colonel Beauchamp would be first-rate happy to offer you a taste of his, only, gentlemen boarders are generally supposed to know their own lady's taste best. Haven't you been writing an unaccountable quantity to-day, Mrs. Allen Barnaby?—Say."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby in reply to this question turned her benignant countenance upon her friend. There was a gentle and very charming smile upon it, but the eyes were considerably more than half-closed, and for a few seconds she suffered herself to be looked at in silence; then she said, shaking her head, and smiling if possible with still more benignity—

"Oh no! You are quite mistaken, dear lady; I have not written a single line."

There was a look of blank disappointment on the countenance of Mrs. Beauchamp on hearing this, which recalled Mrs. Allen Barnaby to the necessity of not losing any birds already in her hand, while starting away to look after others which were still in the bush; she therefore so far recalled herself to the passing moment as to say—

"You look surprised, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, and so you well may! But your surprise would cease if you knew what a morning I had passed."

"Not sick, I hope?" returned her new friend, with very sincere anxiety. "I'm sure I wouldn't have you take a spell of sickness just now for more than I'll say."

"You are very kind! Oh no! Not sick, or sorry, I assure you; only engaged, too incessantly occupied by a multitude of letters, to do anything but read them."

"My! A mail from the old country, I expect?" replied Mrs. Beauchamp, with a sort of congratulatory smile.

"No," returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby composedly, "not so. All my letters were from ladies and gentlemen—mostly from gentlemen, indeed, who were here last night."

A visible augmentation of colour suffused the cheeks of Mrs. Beauchamp on hearing these words; an effect which was instantly and satisfactorily remarked by the authoress.

"They will be at fisticuffs about me soon, if I don't take care," thought she, "but it will be better for me to carry on everything peaceably, and profit by them all in turn." And with this feeling she smiled with more of peculiar and personal affection on Mrs. Beauchamp than she had done before, and said, "I must ask your advice and assistance about all this. In a society so particularly select and elegant, I would not, for the world, offend anybody; but it is impossible to accept all these invitations, and you must help me to decide whom I must refuse."

"What's that about invitations, mamma?" demanded Madame Tornorino, who, like the rest of the company, had remarked something queer in her mother's looks, which now, with her inherited shrewdness, she thought might very likely be the result of more compliments and invitations. "I say, mamma," she resumed, "I beg you will let me know all the invites in time, for I hate to be taken at a hop, and so does the Don too."

"Fear not, my love," replied her mother, with a tranquillising nod, "I will always contrive to give you time enough for dressing. But upon my word, dear, I don't think I can promise to keep a regular calendar of all invitations, it would occupy more time than I can spare. But you may go into my room if you like it, after dinner, and collect all the notes and letters which you will find lying about upon my table, and read them, if it will be any satisfaction to you."

"Ask if you may bring them all down into the drawing-room," whispered Miss Matilda Perkins across Don Tornorino, by whose side it was the pleasure of his young wife that her friend should always sit (thinking it, probably, more cozy and comfortable to keep their party thus far together, than to let any other lady sit next him, particularly "that odious Annie Beauchamp," whom she hated above all things, and towards whom she had more than once caught the beautiful eyes of her Don directed). "Oh, for goodness' sake bring them down, my darling dearest Madame Tornorino!" reiterated her eager friend.

"Very well," was the reply. "Hold your tongue and say nothing about it. I shall bring them down if I like it, and ask no leave, you may depend upon it. I should have thought you might have guessed that without my telling you."

Mrs. Beauchamp, who, though for very different reasons, was quite as anxious about these invitations as Matilda herself, ventured to ask a few questions of her new friend respecting the names of the parties from whence they came; to all of which Mrs. Allen Barnaby replied with *almost* her former affectionate warmth of manner—

"You shall see them all, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp. Don't imagine for a moment that it is possible I could have any reserves with you! Oh no! we must talk them all over together."

"Thank you very much," replied the comforted Mrs. Beau-

champ. "I certainly should like to see who comes forward first and foremost. I told you how it would be, didn't I, Mrs. Allen Barnaby? You won't forget that, I expect?—Say."

"No, indeed! I shall never forget the exceedingly kind and friendly manner in which you have conducted yourself towards me throughout, my dear madam. I shall not easily meet with any one whose society I shall enjoy so thoroughly as I do yours."

There was some comfort in hearing this, but the words did not seem to mean exactly what the same words would have meant yesterday—at least, so thought, or rather so felt, Mrs. Beauchamp. But yet, to do her justice, she did by no means fully enter into or understand the nature of the change she remarked. She thought, indeed, that it was likely enough Mrs. Allen Barnaby might like to listen to other first-rate patriotic ladies, as well as to her, and might wish to compare testimonies together in order to get at the exact truth; but for all the calculations which were going on as to whom she could turn to greatest profit in *other* ways, nothing of the kind ever entered her head. Neither did she long suffer the trifling difference which she had fancied perceptible in the illustrious lady's tone to dwell upon her mind.

"I ought to be ashamed of myself," thought she, the moment afterwards, "for having any such fancies. As if we ought not, one and all, to think of the one great object of having justice done to our country; and there is no danger upon that score as long as this dear writing lady keeps clear of those wicked and rebellious free states that don't scruple to abuse our venerable institutions about slavery, just as bad, more shame for them, as our foreign enemies themselves can do."

So the next time Mrs. Allen Barnaby gave her an opportunity of speaking to her again, which was not immediately—for to say truth that lady had in a great degree lost the comfort she might have found from Mrs. Carmichael's dinners in consequence of the immense importance she had hitherto attached to all that was said to her, and was now making amends to herself for it, by attending much more to the dinner, and much less to the conversation than heretofore. But as soon as she found an opportunity, Mrs. Beauchamp said—

"Do you happen, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, ma'am, to recollect any of the names of the gentlemen who have been writing to you? I can't say but what I should like to know who's come forward."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby, who had just completed the demolition of a very savoury plate, and had been reflecting during the pleasant process on the various words and phrases which had reached her since her arrival at New Orleans, relative to the first-rateness of standing of her already well-secured friend, Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, promptly replied, and in accents of perfectly recovered cordiality—

"My dearest friend! I have the very worst head in the world

for names! Let me see—let me see—oh, yes, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp! there is one I remember perfectly; and the better, perhaps, because I received *two* notes so signed. Gregory is the name. Both General Gregory and Mrs. Gregory wrote most obligingly, and very strongly urged our immediately paying them a visit at their place in the country."

"Possible!" exclaimed Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, and there stopped.

"Possible?" repeated Mrs. Allen Barnaby. "What does that mean, my dear friend? Do you doubt its being possible?"

"Oh my! no, Mrs. Allen Barnaby. No doubt of anything you say could enter my thoughts, you may be very sure. Only to me, who so well know the general and his uncommon quietness upon all matters, leaving everything to his wife, you know, and all that, it does seem something like a miracle, that he should sit down and write an invitation, specially as his lady was doing the very same."

"It certainly shows a most amiable and cordial feeling of hospitality," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby; "so much so, indeed, that I felt the moment I read their two letters, that it would be quite impossible to refuse the invitation."

"But I do hope and trust, my near lady," returned the now really terrified Mrs. Beauchamp, "that nothing and nobody will be able to lead you aside from the plan we have so beautifully laid down together for the examination of all the most important parts of the Union.—Say?"

"No, dearest Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp," responded the authoress; "most truly may you affirm, both to yourself and others, that *nothing* will induce me to abandon a project to which my heart and my understanding are alike pledged, alike wedded, alike bound!"

This was uttered with solemnity, the movement of the knife and fork being intermitted, and the raised eyes fixed devoutly on the ceiling.

"Thank God!" ejaculated Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, fervently; "then I don't care a hominy bean for earthly man, woman, or child. That tour can't be done every day, from July to eternity; and it is *I* that shall be, as I must say I ought, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, your companion and leader, to edify you as to where you should look first and foremost."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby assiduously fed herself upon duck and green corn, and smiled and nodded an affectionate assent.

It is probable that the whole party at the boarding-table had heard enough of what had passed there, to feel some curiosity as to *what* was to be "brought down," and accordingly the cigar-smoking, which usually takes place at that hour in "*the chambers*"—the wives of American citizens being imperturbably amiable on this point—was postponed, and the whole party assembled in the saloon.

Patty failed not to do as she had declared she would do if it so pleased her, and as it did please her, to scamper into her mamma's room the moment the party had risen from table, and to scamper down again as fast as she could run, with both her hands full of letters, and a few, *for fun*, secured beneath her chin: she reached the saloon just as the last of the company entered it, and bouncing up to the longest table, bent over it, and discharged the three divisions of her load at the same moment.

"There!" she exclaimed; "now then, let's see what it's all about."

"That dear creature's vivacity will never be restrained, let the business in hand be ever so important!" observed her mother, moving with a very slow and deliberate pace towards the table.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby was in truth in no great hurry to reach it; for not only the ardent eager-minded Miss Matilda Perkins was already bending over the still open despatches, and possessing herself of their contents with the most assiduous industry, but very many others of the party were doing exactly the same thing, without the slightest shadow of restraint or ceremony; and as the lady to whom they were addressed happened to prefer their being read by all the world, she had no wish to check the operation by her presence. But Mrs. Allen Barnaby showed her English ignorance in thus restraining her steps—nothing short of her withdrawing her letters altogether, or so folding them up that no portion of their contents could be seen, would have sufficed to check it.

The lively Patty, however, either from consideration for those who could not find room to place themselves where they could read the various pages thus displayed, or else because she thought it a capital joke to show off to all the set at once how much they were in fashion, began reading them aloud with great distinctness, and certainly much to the satisfaction of all who listened to her.

"Oh what a madcap!" cried Mrs. Allen Barnaby, dropping into a chair before she had reached even the outskirts of the throng that was pressing round her daughter. "Is not Madame Tornorino a saucy creature, Louisa?"

This was addressed to the greatly-improved and almost gay Miss Perkins, who really seemed to be inspired with new life by the gentle kindness of Annie Beauchamp, the unceasing good-humour of Mr. Egerton, and more still—oh, infinitely more—by the very marked attentions which she saw her dear Matilda receiving from all the American gentlemen who approached her. To this appeal of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, she replied in an accent that really seemed almost fearless—

"There does not seem to be much change in her, certainly, ma'am."

But what Miss Louisa Perkins said at that moment was of little consequence. The "Ohs!" the "Mys!" the "Possibles!" that she heard from the party round the table, as Patty proceeded in her

lecture, were so exactly everything that Mrs. Allen Barnaby desired, that she attended to nothing else. She caught the eye of the major (who had seated himself at no great distance from her), just as Patty was pompously giving forth the profound admiration and respect of some general, colonel, or major, followed by the most pressing invitation to his "mansion," for as many weeks or months as it would be convenient for the admirable authoress and her party to remain; and the look that was exchanged between them showed their feelings to be in the most perfect conjugal harmony.

"I am delighted, madam," said Mrs. Beauchamp, when Patty had concluded her self-imposed task, "I am first-rate delighted to find that so many of the very highest standing among our gentlemen and ladies appear to be availed of the obligations they are likely to owe you; and I can't enough be thankful to myself for having lost no time in making that fact generally known to all."

"I am sure you are all excessively kind," returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, arranging her heavy gilt bracelets with rather an absent air. "I perfectly delight in the country, and its charming inhabitants!"

"Wife!" whispered the major in her ear, as he passed by, to leave the room; "come up stairs—I want to speak to you."

And Mrs. Allen Barnaby really wanted to speak to him; so permitting him, with her usual tact, to disappear before she rose to follow him, she extended her hand to Mrs. Beauchamp, with the full recollection of all she had heard of that lady's reputed wealth and station, and said, not quite in a whisper—

"Oh my dear friend! though of course exceedingly gratified by all this, depend upon it, I can never feel for any other person, charming as they all are, what I feel for you! It is quite impossible I ever should!"

What a fine thing is fame! And must not Mr. John Milton have been in some degree mistaken, when he declared it to be

No plant that grows on mortal soil?

Mrs. Allen Barnaby was unquestionably still in the flesh, and yet she had not only found this "plant" growing in the most delightful abundance in Louisiana, but discovered that it was easily convertible to all manner of domestic purposes, from a pot-herb to a garland for the brow. Nay, had she at that moment poured several handfuls of dollars in the lap of Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, that lady could not have considered it more completely satisfactory payment for all she had done, and all that she meant to do for the honour, glory, profit, and convenience of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, than did those few words from her in return. For Mrs. Allen Barnaby had not only acquired fame, but she knew it; and had skill enough *at once* to bring it into current use, as a sort of bill of exchange, which, as long as her credit lasted, would pass very well in payment for most things in a country so exceedingly fond of celebrity and renown as the United States of America.

On reaching her room, Mrs. Allen Barnaby found her husband already there, and waiting for her rather impatiently.

"My dear," he began, "I won't waste any time complimenting you upon the capital manner in which you have set all these funny folks spinning, but I see it all, I promise you, and I admire your cleverness accordingly. What you and I must talk about, my dear, is not how all this has been brought about, but how we can best turn it to account."

"That's quite true, Donny," she replied, with a decisive nod, that spoke as plainly as any words could have done, how completely she agreed with him. "Don't fancy that I mean to content myself by being blown up by all these famous fine words—not a bit of it, I promise you. I don't see any good reason whatever why we should not travel about from house to house, as long as the fancy holds them, living upon the fat of the land, as we shall be sure to do, major, and paying nothing for it but just scribbling and sputtering a little puff, puff, puff, as we go along. Shan't we '*progress*' like a steam-engine!"

The major clapped his hands, and laughed aloud.

"By Jove! my Barnaby," he cried, "I think I am more heartily in love with you than ever I was in my life; and I don't believe you've got your equal in the old world, or the new either. To be sure, my love, that's what we'll do! It is exactly the very thing that came into my head as Patty was reading; and it will be perhaps a better spec than even your quick wit is quite aware of. Of course, I am not quite idle on my side; I am sure it would be a shame if I was, and you working away as you do; and I have found out a thing or two about these rich planter people. You, my dear, have got hold of their staple passion, as I may call it, or rather of their two staple passions—that is to say, their vanity about their country and their greatness, and their red-hot terror of losing hold of their slaves. Now you'll keep on *working* 'em on this side, while I'll keep on *playing* 'em, deary, upon another. I find that there isn't scarcely one of these rich slave-holding chaps, who make their niggers wait upon them up and down, from morning to night, so that they do little or nothing but eat, drink, sleep, and spit for themselves—I am told that there isn't scarcely one of 'em who doesn't, more or less, try to keep themselves awake by play. Now can you fancy anything, my dear, falling out much better than that? We shall have to write a letter of thanks, wife, upon my soul we shall, to those precious relations of yours that played *bo-peep* behind the curtain. We shall be living upon roses here—I see it as plain as the handsome nose in your face, my Barnaby. For you may just remember, if you please, that credit doesn't hold out for ever, even in London, and with a fine house, and a fine wife, like you, to back it, Christmas would have been sure to come, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and a *few* little bills, my dear, would have been sure to come with it; whereas in this blessed

land, it seems exceedingly probable, I think, that we shall make money and spend none."

"Exactly so," replied his wife, bowing to him. "That, Mr. Major, is precisely the scheme I have conceived for us during the next four or five months, perhaps. And then, if my work is completed, and I get paid for it in hard cash, as these people say I shall be, we may then venture, I think, to take a house of our own. I should like it to be in the capital, Donny, if they would but make up their minds as to where that is, but it seems hard to find any two of 'em that agree upon that point."

"Never mind that, my dear," returned the major, laughing; "when we do settle down we will take care to fix upon just whatever we think pleasantest; and if we go on as we expect to do, we shall be able to pick and choose as we like. But now, my dear, let us come to business. To which of all these people will it be best to go to first?"

"To the Beauchamps, Donny. Stick to the Beauchamps, my dear, in the first instance. It will look best, a great deal, because of all the fuss I have been making about my love, and affection, and admiration, and gratitude, and all the rest of it. Besides, they certainly *are* very rich; *he* is an inveterate card-player, in a sober way, and that *she* knows how to set a thing going, we have had capital good proof already. So I say, stick to the Beauchamps at first. But, then, you must please to observe that I don't mean to go galivanting in a steamboat all down these everlasting rivers, that they talk about, for I suppose it is a matter of course that we should be expected to pay our own expenses on board, and just think what that would come to, with Patty and her Don upon our hands! Whereas, you'll observe, that when we get to their elegant Big-Gang Bank, that they all talk about, there will be an end of paying—except, indeed, that if the Perkinses really get in there too, I shall expect that they will make us some consideration for it. They need not pay us quite as much as they would at a boarding-house, you know; but they can't expect we should drag them about for nothing."

"My dear love," replied the major, "your notions on every point are so clear, so clever, so quick—in short, so admirable in every way, that I should be a great deal worse than a fool if I attempted to check or control you on any subject of business whatever. Anything of that kind with the Perkinses, I should leave entirely to you. In fact, to say the honest truth, I don't feel that I have tact and skill enough to do anything of the sort myself, but I give you *carte blanche*, my dear."

"Very well, major," returned the lady, laughing, "I understand perfectly. You would like to get the dollars, but you would not like the asking for them. But never mind, my dear, I'll undertake all that, provided you don't object to my using your name a little—I really must do that, major, or I should not be

able to make the thing look right and reasonable, as I should certainly wish to do."

"As you please, my love. My name is your own, you know, so of course you may use it as you like—and luckily they are both so devilish ugly, that I can't say I care much what you say. But now then, as to the time and manner of our starting? What do you mean to say to your dear friend?"

In reply to this question, Mrs. Allen Barnaby entered at some length into an explanation of her views, and as the result will show what these were, we may leave the conjugal consultation uninterrupted.

Annie Beauchamp had left the saloon by her usual point of escape, the window, as soon as Madame Tornorino commenced the reading aloud of her mamma's letters; for to say truth, there was something in the manner and bearing of this English beauty which very particularly irritated the nerves of the young American. Nobody, however, followed her example; for no single individual present, except herself, seemed without some feeling of curiosity as to the contents of the despatches that Madame Tornorino was thus making public. Even Mr. Egerton, though hitherto he had not displayed any very strong feeling of interest in the immediate concerns of Major and Mrs. Allen Barnaby, was now evidently listening with the rest of the company to these flattering testimonials of Louisianian and Carolinian esteem; nor did his attention to the voice of the fair reader relax till she had, in loud and distinct tones, gone through the perusal of every document.

But upon Patty's throwing down the last sheet, and exclaiming, "There, that's all!" he immediately walked up to Miss Louisa Perkins, and offering his arm, said—

"Do you not think, Miss Perkins, that we should find the air of the balcony very refreshing?"

For half a moment the kind-hearted Louisa paused to consider whether there were any possible means by which she could transfer this honour to her sister; but perceiving, on turning her eyes round to look for her, that she was in earnest conversation with Mr. Horatio Timmsthackle, she smiled a ready assent to the agreeable proposal, and taking the young man's offered arm, walked through the same window at which Annie Beauchamp had disappeared.

That young lady, whom for a few minutes Miss Louisa had really forgotten, was seated on her favourite bench beneath the orange-tree, with her eyes fixed in rather a vacant glance upon another orange-tree immediately opposite to her.

"Oh dear me! There's that nice young lady all by herself!" exclaimed Miss Louisa, using a little gentle influence upon the arm of her companion, in order to lead his steps towards her. "And how long have you been here, all alone, my dear?" she continued, addressing the solitary beauty with an affectionate smile. "I thought we were all in the great room together, listening to Miss

Patty bawling out those surprisingly kind letters that have been addressed to her mamma. I will not deny that I, for one, was rather curious to hear them, but yet I think if I had known that you were sitting quietly here by yourself, I should have been apt to leave Miss Patty and the letters, for the pleasure of hearing you talk a little."

Annie smiled in return to this speech, but not very gaily, and moving to the end of the bench, made room for Miss Louisa to sit beside her. Mr. Egerton looked a little uncertain what to do, but after the hesitation of a moment, he took advantage of Miss Louisa's evident intention to leave space sufficient for him also, and sat himself down beside her.

As neither of her companions seemed at all inclined to converse, Miss Perkins seemed to think it incumbent on her to talk a little herself, and began accordingly—

"I can't help thinking, Miss Beauchamp," she said, "that the ladies and gentlemen of your country must be the kindest and most hospitable people in the world. I could not have believed it possible that we should all of us have received such a quite wonderful number of invitations, and not one of us knowing a single soul in the whole country, only a few days ago, almost as one may say. I am sure Mrs. O—Mrs. Allen Barnaby I mean, has good reason to praise the country, and all the people in it, if she is really going to write a book, for I certainly think that they are kinder and more hospitable than any nation I ever heard of in all my life before, and I shall always say so, though I shan't write it."

This was a very long speech for Miss Louisa Perkins to make; but still it did not produce the effect she desired, by making her companions talk too, for neither of them spoke a single word. Mr. Egerton might have been seen, however, if any one had happened to look at him, stealing a glance across his neighbour at the beautiful young face beyond her. Perhaps the owner of that beautiful young face was aware of it, for the delicately pale cheek blushed deeply, and seemed to send its bright reflection even to the brow and neck. But the head was instantly turned away, and the curious young Englishman had no opportunity at that moment of criticising its American contour.

"Your sister is trying, I think, to catch your eye, Miss Perkins," said Mr. Egerton; "and, if I am not mistaken, she wants you to go to her."

"Dear me, you don't say so?" said Miss Louisa, hastily starting up, and hurrying away; "and yet I wonder, too, considering——"

But she moved so quickly, that she was out of hearing, and within the window before she could finish the sentence.

The young lady who had been stationed on the other side of her, had so completely turned herself away, leaning over the arm of the bench which they occupied, that she did not appear immediately to perceive her departure.

"Miss Beauchamp!" said Mr. Egerton, gently—so gently, indeed, that it was extraordinary his voice should have made her start as it did. "Miss Beauchamp," said he, "I have a proposal—I mean that I have a bargain to propose to you; will you listen to it?"

The American young lady started a little at hearing these words, and upon looking round, and finding herself *tête-à-tête* with the English young gentleman who spoke them, half rose from her seat with the intention of walking away. But the *second thought* which prevented her doing this, not only came quickly, but decidedly; and it was with an air of being very particularly determined to hear him, and to answer him, too, that she turned herself round, and said—

"Yes, sir, I am quite willing to listen to you."

Frederick Egerton would perhaps have been less disconcerted if she had answered less complyingly; but marvelling at his own folly in feeling thus, he rallied, and proceeded pretty nearly in the terms he had intended.

"That is very obliging," he said, "and I will not detain you very long. What I wish to propose, Miss Beauchamp, is this: let us mutually agree not definitely to form any opinion of each other's country and countrymen and countrywomen," he added, with a smile, "till we are fairly enabled to do so by having rather more general information on the subject than we either of us possess at present."

Annie eyed him almost steadily, for about a second, and then blushed a good deal for having done so; but she, too, rallied quickly, and replied—

"Perhaps, sir, it would be more like good Christians and reasonable human beings if we did so."

"But if we make this agreement," he resumed, with a smile which had no very malicious expression in it, and which certainly made him look very handsome,—“if we make this agreement, Miss Beauchamp, we must do it fairly on both sides, must we not? I mean that we must not scruple to confess to each other the observations, either favourable or unfavourable, which we may chance to make. This is necessary to truth and justice, is it not?"

Either in the words themselves, or in his manner of speaking them, there was something that made Annie blush again; but this emotion, however caused, seemed to make her angry, either with herself or with him, for she knit her beautiful brows as she replied—

"If you wish me to confess that I entirely disapprove and condemn the line of conduct adopted by some of the gentlemen and ladies of New Orleans, towards some of the gentlemen and ladies of England, as witnessed both by yourself and me, sir, during the last few days, I am quite ready to gratify you. I do disapprove and condemn it greatly."

"Perhaps you mean," said Egerton, colouring a little in his turn,

"perhaps you mean, Miss Beauchamp, that you disapprove and condemn any and every hospitality or kindness of any sort offered from the inhabitants of your country towards the inhabitants of mine?"

"No!" she replied, but in an altered and less haughty tone. "No! I mean not that. I mean that I am sorry and ashamed to perceive that even the admirable judgment and good sense of Americans can be blinded and rendered useless by—by their prejudices."

Egerton perceived that he had touched a string which vibrated too strongly for pique or pettishness to effect the tone which it produced. He longed to speak to the beautiful and intelligent-looking young creature before him with more of candour and common-sense than he had yet done, but felt strangely at a loss how to begin. He was perplexed not only by his own embarrassment, but by seeking to comprehend why he felt it.

Was he afraid of Miss Annie Beauchamp? Absurd idea! He rejected it indignantly, and, mastering the sort of shyness which had checked him, he said more seriously, and perhaps, too, with more punctilious respect than he had ever before used in addressing her—

"May I venture, Miss Beauchamp, to believe that, in using the word *prejudice* on the subject to which I think you allude, your opinions respecting it are at all like what you suppose mine to be?"

"I would rather have avoided all conversation with you on such a topic, sir," replied Annie, after meditating for a moment; "but yet, I believe that I have no right to think you mean to pain me by speaking on it. Nobody, I believe, supposes that any inhabitant of a slave State can see anything to lament in the laws which exist in it. This is not a very fair judgment—but it is idle to complain of it; for it is only a part of the injustice that is done us. There are many among *us* who judge you—I mean your country—more fairly, Mr. Egerton. All Americans, as you would find if you knew more individuals among them,—all Americans do not suppose that all Englishmen approve the atrocities practised upon children in your manufacturing districts, nor would they think it right to take it for granted, that you *all* approve the regulations now enforced by your poor-laws."

Egerton listened to her with great attention, and certainly with great astonishment also. Her words and manner produced, moreover, another feeling, but this related rather to himself than to her. He began to suspect, that he *had* been guilty of injustice; that he had formed his opinions hastily, and without sufficient grounds, or, at any rate, that he had not allowed enough for individual exceptions; and, with the candour which such self-condemnation was likely to produce, he replied—

"I believe you are very right, Miss Beauchamp. I believe that

we English do all of us form opinions, and pronounce them too, a great deal too much upon general views, without seeking—as we ought to do—for exceptions that might lead to modify them. Your words have suggested this very useful truth, and I shall not forget them. But you will allow, I am sure, that, in order to make this productive of all the good of which it is capable, it is necessary that we should occasionally meet with good sense and candour equal to your own, and that all our attempts to become acquainted with your widely-extended and important country should not be always and for ever met with the broad assertion—that it is the best and wisest in the world. This is a species of information which it is impossible to receive in the sort of wholesale manner in which it is given, and it is often rejected *en masse*, because offered *en masse*.”

These words produced on the mind of Annie Beauchamp an effect exceedingly like what hers had produced on that of Frederic Egerton; that is to say, she felt there might be some truth in them, and the coincidence made her blush again; but she smiled too, and in such a sort, that the young Englishman not only thought her a thousand times handsomer than ever, but he thought also—and very nearly independent of any such consideration—that he should greatly like to converse further with her now that so much of the prejudice, which had mutually influenced them, seemed in so fair a way of being lessened, at least, if not altogether removed.

But exactly at this moment, and before Frederic had advanced further than gently smiling in return, Miss Louisa Perkins came back again through the window, exclaiming—

“Oh, dear me! You are quite mistaken in fancying my sister wanted me, my dear young gentleman; for, instead of that, I believe, between you and I, she would a good deal rather that I should just stay away. It was some time after I went in before I could see at all, for you know they make the room so dark with blinds; but when I did find her at last, I saw in a minute that I had better keep away, for she was talking with another person so very earnestly, that they neither of them seemed as if they wanted any more company.”

This was all said in a manner so unusually lively and with such an air of extreme satisfaction, that it seemed as if her return to the balcony was particularly agreeable to her feelings. Miss Beauchamp again made room for her beside herself, but, whether she was quite as much delighted at this renewed arrangement as Miss Louisa, may be doubted.

As to Egerton, he did not seem at all disposed to leave the matter in any doubt, as far as he was concerned himself; for, without attempting to utter a word in reply to Miss Perkins's information, he started from his place, and, passing hastily through the saloon, left the house.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANOTHER large party, of which Mrs. Allen Barnaby was again very decidedly the heroine, concluded the day, and it was not till the following morning that any opportunity occurred for her to converse with her still more highly-favoured friend, Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp, upon the important subject of their approaching departure.

A very considerable change had taken place in the former lady's state of mind, since the subject had been last canvassed between them; and though, in point of time, this interval had not exceeded three days, whole years sometimes pass over us without producing an equally decisive effect. There was, as the reader may by this time be pretty tolerably well aware, a good deal of native decisiveness of purpose in the character of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and when she had determined upon doing anything, she generally did it. But notwithstanding this strong propensity to having her own way, the admirable fund of good sense which she possessed prevented that way, for the most part, from leading her astray from her interest, and therefore, in all former conversations with Mrs. Beauchamp upon the subject of the plans they were to pursue together, she had hardly felt conscious of having any wish or will, except that of ingratiating herself still further in the favour of that lady, and promoting everything that could lead to increasing their intercourse and intimacy.

But now matters were altogether changed, and their mutual position pretty nearly reversed. Mrs. Allen Barnaby felt all over that it was she who was the person to confer honour, and Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp the person to receive it. In her opinion, therefore, it followed naturally that for the future, that lady's wishes and convenience were on all points to give way to her own; and though quite determined not to permit either will or whim—no, not even her own, to deprive her of the solid advantages which she intended to reap from the devoted attachment of the wealthy planter's lady, her mode of addressing her when they were next *tête-à-tête*, approached very nearly in spirit to the celebrated—

'Tis mine to speak, and thine to hear—

of the romance. Nor was she at all mistaken in the calculation she had made respecting the degree in which this was likely to be endured, without producing any disagreeable result whatever. Perhaps Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp was a *little surprised* to hear that her dear friend had given up all thoughts of the delightful steam-boat excursion they were all to make together; but as to *anger*, no such feeling ever entered her head, and still less her heart; and her first words were, after becoming thoroughly *availed*, as she

would have said, of the change which had taken place in Mrs. Allen Barnaby's intentions—

"Then you don't think, I expect, that you should be able to fix yourself for another long journey so soon?"

"I don't think that I shall set off upon another long journey so soon," returned the authoress, slightly smiling; "but not from any fear of fatigue, or over-exertion. Where the mind is forcibly sustained, Mrs. Beauchamp, the body rarely gives way. No! My reasons for this alteration are wholly distinct from any idea of mere personal pleasure, or personal inconvenience. From you, my dear madam, I have no reserves, nor do I wish to have any; the generous, the truly liberal hospitality with which you have invited myself and the whole of my suite to your house at Big-Gang Bank, can never be remembered without a feeling of gratified, and, let me say, grateful affection. I mean, I fully mean, to accept this hospitality, and to repose with my important manuscript before me, under the shadow of your friendly sugar-canes, well-knowing that I can in no way so well prove to you how thoroughly I appreciate your kindness, as by accepting it."

"And there I am sure you are quite right, my dearest lady," replied the really delighted Mrs. Beauchamp. "There is nothing that I know of that would be so always agreeable to me as that; and to my husband, the colonel, I expect, as much as to me. For in course, I calculate upon your husband, the major, not forgetting his card-playing, because he is in the country. He is too smart a gentleman for that, I expect."

"Oh, no! There is not the slightest fear of it, I am sure," returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with an encouraging nod. "The major is really one of the most amiable men in the world, and would rather, I am convinced, play every night of his life to amuse and please so excellent a person as the colonel, than follow any more favourite pursuit of his own. And to make you quite easy on that head, I can assure you that he really does not dislike cards at all himself. All men of fashion with us, you know, are accustomed to play, and rather high, too, even from their earliest childhood, and this of course becomes habitual to them, so that scarcely any of our really distinguished men ever like to go to bed till they have passed their accustomed hour or two at play. So do not let that worry you, dear Mrs. Beauchamp, it will all do very well, I dare say. The major, as you may naturally suppose, has been accustomed to have his attention roused and kept awake by a tolerably high stake. All men of fortune are used to that, I presume, in every country. But there is no danger that our gentlemen should differ about that point—and in short, I look forward to enjoying a long visit to you exceedingly."

Mrs. Beauchamp, who had already began running over in her mind the different people to whom she could show off her illustrious guest, replied with the most cordial earnestness, assuring her that

there was nothing the colonel would not feel ready and bound to do, in order to show his respect and gratitude for the admirable, elegant expressions respecting the slave business, which Mrs. Allen Barnaby had read up to them.

"On that point," replied our authoress, with a good deal of solemnity, "on that point I shall have much more to say. I consider it, in fact, one of such prodigious importance to this noble country, that I am almost tempted to believe I should make my work of higher utility by devoting my pages wholly to the Slave States, than by mixing up in it any observations concerning that portion of the Union from whence slavery has been so unwisely banished. My general admiration for the whole country, and for all the truly superior people who inhabit it, would render it extremely disagreeable to me, of course, were I to feel myself obliged to blame the principles and conduct of any portion of them. And yet, my dear madam, how could I help pointing the finger of reprobation against those who actually threaten, as one of the gentlemen so well observed the other night, to revolutionise this magnificent and unequalled country, by abolishing slavery?"

Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp was in ecstasies while listening to this speech, and really seemed to restrain herself with difficulty from falling at the feet of the speaker.

"Oh my!" she exclaimed, while tears of emotion trembled on her eyelids; "I expect that you *do* understand the nature of the Union better than any gentleman or lady that ever visited it before! Yes, my dear lady, you are quite right. There is not one of us could bear or abide your speaking any way disrespectful of any part of our glorious and immortal country; and therefore, as you most elegantly observe, it will be far better, and preferable a hundred thousand times over, that you should write wholly and solely upon the great blessings and advantages of slavery, instead of turning away from our quite perfect state, just to belittle the others. Pray God you may keep in the same mind about that, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and then I shall be only just too happy, that's all."

"Yes, dear lady, that is my view of the case, exactly. And if we can but contrive to keep the good major, and the rest of our party, tolerably well contented and amused in the South and West, I really do not see any reason for our travelling North and East, just to find what is rather *less* perfect."

"Oh my! Yes, dearest Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that is exactly hitting it off to a nicety. *Rather less perfect*, that's just the fact. *Rather less perfect*," repeated the patriotic Mrs. Beauchamp, infinitely relieved by finding that nothing which had been said upon slavery (which was of course the subject nearest to their warm southern hearts) had produced any very greatly reduced estimate of the general perfection of the Union, as a whole, on the mind of the enlightened traveller.

"There is one other point, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, on which I must say a word or two," resumed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with an affectionate smile. "You must promise not to think that my bringing all my party with me is any mark of ostentation. Of course you know that with us an author of any celebrity is considered as paying the very highest compliment possible, by bringing friends with him to any house where he may be invited; it is always considered as a proof that he looks upon the family he visits as worthy to become a part of his own chosen circle; and this feeling indeed is carried so far, that I have known every one of a party of ten, who accompanied one of our favourite writers to a nobleman's place in the country, desired to give their autographs, which were accordingly inscribed in the album of the duchess—the duchess? Yes, I am pretty sure it was the duchess—my own favourite duchess, who is always so kind to me. I just mention this circumstance, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, to show that in bringing my party with me, I am paying you the greatest compliment I have in my power to bestow. And I wish you to be aware, my dear friend, that this is my reason for doing it, and not any foolish feeling of ostentation. I hope you understand this?"

"I do, my dearest lady, most perfectly and entirely," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, warmly. "I feel all your goodness and kindness to me and my country, and nothing shall be wanting that I can do to make Big-Gang Bank agreeable to you. Only dear, dear lady, let me entreat you not to be running away in a hurry. It is a great wide town of a place, as you will see, and there will be room enough for you and your friends, and a heap of folks besides, if you should like more company. And that, my dear lady, is one of the blessed advantages of having a gang of slaves at command. It is likely enough that if you travelled eastward to Philadelphia, and Boston, and New York, or to any of the unfortunate free states, you would find that noble-minded as all the people are, on account of their being Americans, they would be so fretted and troubled about where to get help, that ten to one they would not be able to invite you to their houses, so many at a time, as we can do."

"Poor things! Is it possible that their foolish prejudices keep them in so degraded a condition? It is really pitiable!" returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, adding, with great sincerity, "I really doubt if, under all the circumstances, notwithstanding my reverence for them as Americans, I really very much doubt if I should find everything there as completely to my taste as I do here."

Mrs. Beauchamp again applauded the admirable good sense and discrimination of her friend, and they parted, after it having been made perfectly well understood that the time of their setting off together for Big-Gang Bank, was to be entirely regulated by the pleasure and convenience of Mrs. Allen Barnaby.

Our provident and thoughtful heroine had already written very

eloquent, amiable, and satisfactory letters to all her New Orleans correspondents, in reply to their invitations; and she now stood with a list in her hand of the names and the places, her promised visits to which were likely to maintain the whole party at free quarters for at least six months to come.

"Bravo!" she exclaimed aloud to her heart; "and now for a little visit to the dear good Perkinses."

She found the two sisters in a very comfortable state of mind, and by the help of a little ingenuity in a more comfortable state of body, too, than could have been expected, considering the usual temperature of the quarters that had been assigned them. Their bedroom was indeed almost intolerably small, and intolerably hot; but the good-natured Cleopatra hinted to them that nobody ever came into the wide sort of corridor upon which their attic apartment opened, and which, as is usual in most houses in that region, stretched the whole length of the house, except to look for boxes and trunks, that being the great receptacle for all such articles.

After receiving this hint, which was made intelligible by sundry grimaces, indicating the possibility of putting forth from their crowded room a table and chairs, the sisters ventured, without any more special permission, to establish themselves there during the performance of all the needful stitchery which little wardrobes require; and though its vicinity to the roof gave it rather a fearful resemblance to the Piombi of Venice, it had a strong current of air passing through it, and they both agreed in thinking it better to sneeze than to be stifled.

Here it was then, that with thimble and scissors, and pincushion and wire, and remnants of lace, and well-smoothed knots of ribbon, the fair Matilda fabricated caps and tuckers to her heart's content; while her willing well-pleased sister, sat opposite to her darning the stockings of both. Had they been discovered so employed a few short days before, the scene would have had quite a different aspect; for Miss Matilda might probably have been groaning under the necessity of decorating a head and bosom that appeared of value to no one but herself; and even the more gentle-tempered Louisa, if not equally bitter and fretful in her misery, might have been looking very nearly as sad, from her dread lest the solemn promise she had received from her sister might not avail to preserve her from the self-destruction to which the utter indifference of all the American gentlemen they had yet seen seemed but too directly to lead.

But now the aspect of everything was changed. Matilda was actually talking to her sister and *laughing*; while the happy Louisa, instead of dreading what she might hear her say next, sat listening and darning, and darning and listening, with the most comfortable air imaginable; and not without hope, perhaps, that among the many pretty speeches repeated to her as having been uttered by

sundry unmarried American gentlemen, she might hear something that sounded really *promising*.

"So, girls!" began the panting Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as she approached them, "you are high enough to be sure, at the very tip top of all things; but when one *does* get here, it is fresh and pleasant enough. Get a chair for me, Louisa, that's a good soul."

And then, upon the gentle spinster's running off to obey her, she dropped into that which she had left, fanning herself with the delightful vegetable fan of New Orleans, which she rarely put out of her hand, except when asleep, and turning her ample person in all directions to catch the current of air, she exclaimed—

"Upon my word you have managed well, ladies! I'll be hanged if I have felt any place so cool since I've been in this stove of a town."

"Oh dear me! I'm glad you like it!" replied the kind Louisa, assiduously arranging a ragged footstool for her accommodation, and without in the least intending to be ironical, as some might have fancied, could they have felt the atmosphere that was thus applauded. "I do believe it is not much hotter here in the garrets than it is down below."

"Hotter, Louisa! I tell you it's twenty times cooler than our room; but I do believe you two are very sharp and clever in looking after your own comforts, and that's one reason why I think you will be pleased at hearing what I am come to say to you now."

The sisters were all attention, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby proceeded—

"There is no need, I suppose, for me to tell you, girls, that I'm got already to be all the fashion at New Orleans. I suppose you have found that out for yourselves?"

"I think so, indeed, my dearest friend, and no wonder," returned Matilda; and, "Yes, indeed, ma'am, 'tis quite plain, as you say," chimed in Louisa.

"Well, then, I hope you will be ready to allow that I am, notwithstanding all that, the same good, kind friend you have ever found me, when I tell you that one of my first thoughts has been, how to make you two share in the advantages which all this fashion and admiration brings with it."

"Oh, my dearest, my most adored friend!" exclaimed the enthusiastic Miss Matilda, clasping her hands, and fully persuaded that they were to be taken upon some exceedingly gay visit.

"Listen to me quietly, Matilda, my dear, and you will see that it is not only your pleasure, but your real interest I have got in view," exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, gravely. "You know what you pay for your board here, and I am told that in many places it is much dearer still, and it has therefore come into my head, and into that of the dear good major too, that we may be able, by a little painstaking, and some few sacrifices, perhaps, on our parts, we may be

able, I say, if you will pay to us just two-thirds of what you do here, to get you hooked in for visitings that may last for months to come, and that, too, in the midst of the very best company, and with plenty of gentlemen about us, Matilda, into the bargain. What do you say to that, my dears?"

Now it is quite certain that after the public reading of Mrs. Barnaby's letters, which, naturally enough, the sisters had listened to very attentively, they had conceived hopes, not only that they should be included in the invitations, for that was a matter not of hope, but of certainty, inasmuch as they had heard that they were so included, with their own watchful ears, but that the scanty purse which supplied their wants, would be very greatly relieved thereby, and that the nine dollars which they now paid every week for their boarding, might be converted, while these visits were in course, to other very much needed purposes.

It was, therefore, rather a blank look that was exchanged between them on first hearing Mrs. Allen Barnaby's generous proposal; but, happily for their peace and prosperity, they both knew her a great deal too well to venture anything in the slightest degree approaching to a remonstrance; and Matilda, being quicker than her sister, and feeling perhaps less difficulty in uttering protestations of gratitude more expected than felt, broke forth, just in time, into a volley of thanks, which sufficed to keep everything smooth, and not only to insure them the visits, and the mitigated expense, but to spare them the very disagreeable assurance that they might just take themselves off, and shift for themselves as soon as they pleased.

"And what do you think of the scheme, Miss Louisa?" demanded their patroness, turning short round upon that quiet lady with a good deal of energy both of look and voice.

"I shall think it a very nice scheme, Mrs. O—Mrs. Allen Barnaby, if it won't be making ourselves too troublesome to you," replied the meek spinster, blushing a little.

"Oh! Very well, then, that business is settled, and you may get ready to pack yourselves up pretty quickly; for I don't mean to stay in this horrid hot place many day's longer, I promise you." And then hinting that though the corridor *was* the coolest place in the house, the two Miss Perkinses somehow or other contrived to make it hot by sitting there, she got up, nodded a farewell, and departed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It happened in the course of the following two or three days, all of which were very fully occupied in paying and receiving visits by the Allen Barnaby party, that Mr. Egerton found himself standing one evening, quite accidentally, behind Major Allen Barnaby, while

that gentleman was engaged at *écarté* at a tolerably high stake, in one of the most fashionable drawing-rooms of New Orleans. Being behind the major, it followed, of course, from the established habits of the two affectionately-attached individuals, that he was opposite to his elegant son-in-law, Don Tornorino, who never failed to be so placed when his respected father-in-law amused himself by playing at cards. Frederic Egerton himself was no great card-player, and knew as little, or rather less, perhaps, about it than most people; nevertheless, he had not remained very long in this position before he saw, or fancied that he saw, certain looks of intelligence steal from beneath the heavy black eyelashes of the Don towards the major. Of course, the moment he conceived this idea, he naturally began to observe more closely; but the doing so did not greatly assist him in positively ascertaining whether the fact were so or not. If it were, it was impossible to refuse to Patty's darling all the credit that could possibly belong to a most dextrously skilful performance of the task. For if at one moment the glance of his eye evidently fell direct upon the major, it wandered so idly the next, here, there, and everywhere, that it was almost impossible to suppose him engaged in any occupation, loyal or disloyal, that demanded attention.

In this manner Egerton was kept in a state of great uncertainty respecting the fact of collusion, or no collusion, between the parties upon whom accident had thus made him a spy, and for a longer space than it is usual for a loiterer to remain in any one place. But at length, one of the young ladies of the family invited him to listen to a song about to be sung in the next room, and he was then obliged to depart without having at all satisfied his mind one way or the other.

Though there is something rather irritating to curiosity in such a doubt as this, Frederic Egerton cared too little about any of the parties, to have kept it long in his remembrance, had not other circumstances occurred to revive it there. *Why* Mr. Frederic Egerton was still at New Orleans, he would himself have found it extremely difficult to say; but though his laundress had been punctual in the most exemplary degree, and though Cleopatra had obeyed all the commands intended to accelerate his departure, with the most scrupulous exactness, there he was still, and probably quite as unable to give any satisfactory answer to a question respecting his future, as to a question respecting his past movements.

For some reason or other, it might be on account of his handsome person and pleasing address, Mr. Egerton had been invited to all the parties that were going on; and as at this particular moment everything *English* seemed the rage at New Orleans, thanks to the charming Mrs. Allen Barnaby, he had been told by several of the country gentlemen whose houses were about to be opened to the authoress, that his company at the same time would be considered as a very agreeable addition to the English circle. His answer to

all these civilities had uniformly been that he doubted whether he should be still in the country, but that it would give him great pleasure, that he was exceedingly obliged, and so forth. When it happened, however, that a similar invitation was given him by Colonel Beauchamp, and very civilly seconded by his wife, his reply was not so ready. Considering his intense aversion to Mrs. Allen Barnaby, her husband, daughter, her daughter's husband, and her friend Miss Matilda, and considering that he perfectly well knew that they were all to be of the party, it seems strange that he should have felt any hesitation about giving a decided refusal to such an invitation the very moment he received it. On the contrary, however, though he certainly coloured a little, which looked as if he felt somewhat embarrassed by the invitation, he replied very distinctly that he should have great pleasure in waiting upon them.

This invitation had been given and accepted before the evening on which a suspicion of unfair play, on the part of the major, had arisen in the mind of Mr. Egerton. Had it been otherwise, it is possible that a natural distaste to being thrown into the society of any one of whom it was possible to conceive such an idea, might have caused him to give a different answer; but as matters now stood, the young Englishman felt more disposed to protect the hospitable American planter than to turn away from him, and as a first step towards doing so, determined to have a little conversation with Annie's pale *protégée*, Louisa, for the purpose, if possible, of learning something concerning the position held by the Barnaby family at home. Not, indeed, that he wanted the gentle spinster's evidence to convince him that the father, mother, and daughter were not, as perhaps he would have phrased it, "*de nous autres*," nor that the son-in-law was not a true-blooded Hidalgo, nor that his friend Louisa herself, or her fair sister, were not ladies particularly well educated or highly bred. All this he might have trusted to his mother-wit to decide for him; but he thought it worth while to discover, if possible, whether the military *chef* of the party had or had not enjoyed the reputation of being an honest man.

It required no very difficult manœuvring to induce the grateful Louisa to walk out upon the convenient terrace with him, even though the doing so involved the necessity of an evident and obvious *tête-à-tête* between them, under the shelter as usual of a blooming orange-tree.

"How do you like this warm climate, Miss Perkins?" he began. "I think you seem to suffer from it less than most of us."

"It does not make me ill at all, Mr. Egerton," she replied; "but I suppose all English people would like a little more cool air if they could get it."

"Undoubtedly. Have your friends the Barnabys been used to such a climate as this before? I rather suppose not, from their appearing so greatly oppressed by it."

"Upon my word that is more than I am able to say," returned

Miss Louisa ; " for, notwithstanding we have got so very intimate, we have not known them long."

" Indeed ! I rather imagined you were related," said Egerton.

" Not at all, sir ; not the least in the world," she replied.

" Then you must think them very amiable people, Miss Perkins, to set off on so long an expedition with them," he observed.

Miss Louisa was rather at a loss how to reply to this observation ; for, in fact, it was during but a short portion of their not long acquaintance that she had been beguiled by her good-nature into thinking any one of them amiable at all ; yet though she hesitated about saying this in so many words, she had quite tact enough to feel that this good, kind young gentleman (whom she had made her mind up to be certain, was violently in love with her young friend and ally Annie Beauchamp) was not at all likely to admire or approve the ways and manners of the Barnaby race more than she did herself, and it was more from esteem for him than any love of gossip, and less still of any unkind feeling, that she answered—

" I don't know about that, Mr. Egerton. My sister Matilda thought she should like to see something of this country, and its ways, which she thought likely, I believe, to be greatly different from ours, and that it was that brought us across the sea."

" That was very sisterly and good-natured on your part, Miss Louisa," he replied ; " but do you not think it was rather a dangerous experiment for two single ladies to put themselves under the protection of a gentleman whom they knew so little of ? You must forgive my speaking so freely, Miss Perkins, on the score of my being a countryman."

" Indeed, sir, it needs no excuse ; on the contrary, I take it exceedingly kind of you, and I won't deny but what I think your remark seems a very just one. To be sure, we seem to be very comfortable just now, because all the American ladies and gentlemen seem inclined to be so civil to us on account of Mrs. O—I mean Mrs. Allen Barnaby's writing á book about them."

" What name was it, Miss Louisa, that you were going to give her ?" said Egerton ; " something beginning with an O."

Though Miss Louisa Perkins had been certainly desired not to refer in any way to the former appellation of the major, it did not occur to her as possible that Mr. Egerton should take any unfair advantage of him on account of his having changed his name, and she therefore replied with perfect frankness—

" I was going to say the name O'Donagough, sir. They used to call themselves O'Donagough when we first knew them, which is now rather better than a year ago."

" O'Donagough ?" repeated Egerton, musingly. " Is it an Irish name ?"

" I don't know anything about that, Mr. Egerton," she replied.

"We made acquaintance with them first at Brighton, where, as I dare say you know, sir, a great many strangers are always coming and going without knowing very much about one another. But this I must say for Major and Mrs. O'Donagough, and their daughter Miss Patty as she then was, that we saw them in the very best of society. Indeed they were very nearly related to some of the highest company there. Perhaps you may have heard of General Hubert, sir? He seemed to be a gentleman very well known by all the higher sort of people."

"General Hubert?" repeated Egerton, with a stare of great astonishment. "These Barnabys, as they now call themselves, related to General Hubert? I cannot help thinking that you are mistaken about that, Miss Louisa. I do not think it likely that General Hubert should be related to these—to this family that you are with."

"I don't think it does seem very likely, sir, myself," replied Miss Louisa, very ingenuously; "but yet I do assure you it is quite true, for I was in their company myself, and my sister Matilda with me, when General Hubert, and Mrs. Hubert, and young Mr. Hubert the son, and old Mrs. Compton, Mrs. Hubert's aunt, all came to drink tea and pass the evening with Major and Mrs. O'Donagough, as they were called then at Brighton. And my sister Matilda made the tea; so you see, sir, that I could not very well be mistaken."

"'Tis very strange," said Egerton, looking almost as much mystified as the Danish prince himself when using the same words. "But certainly, Miss Perkins," he added, after a few moments' consideration, "I do not see how it is possible you could be mistaken about it."

"Oh no, sir, you may quite take my word for it, that I'm not at all mistaken about this relationship. And what's more," continued Miss Louisa, with natural eagerness to convince her companion that she was making no blunder in her statement, "what's more, Mr. Egerton, I have been at a party in their house in Curzon-street, in London, when not only General Hubert and his lady and daughter were there too, but ever so many more ladies and gentlemen also, who were, I believe, related to the general or his lady. A Mr. and Mrs. Stephenson were some of them. Perhaps, sir, you may know the names of Mr. and Mrs. Stephenson, too?"

"Certainly I do," replied Egerton, his puzzle becoming greater as his belief strengthened, as to the correctness of Miss Louisa's statement. "Did the Huberts and Stephensons know these friends of yours by the name of Barnaby as well as by that of O'Donagough?"

Miss Perkins reflected for a moment before she answered, and then replied—

"Upon my word I don't know about that—I don't much think they ever were called Barnaby till they came away."

"May I ask you, Miss Perkins," resumed the persevering

Egerton, "if you know the reason which induced the major to change his name?"

This question seemed to awaken the simple-minded Louisa to the impropriety she had been guilty of in so frankly stating to a perfect stranger a circumstance which she had been especially desired to conceal, and she stammered, blushed, and faltered considerably before she determined how to reply to it; but at length she said in an accent calculated to remove suspicion, if anything could—

"I believe, Mr. Egerton, I have done what they would think very wrong in talking about it at all; but though I must say the doing it at first was just thoughtless and nothing else, yet your kindness, sir, in seeming to care a little about us, because of our being English, makes me feel as if I had done no more than right neither; and this much I think I ought to say over and into the bargain, and that is, that Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as we call her now, *did* tell me, and my sister Matilda, the whole history why it was that the major thought it best to change his name, and that it was rather for his honour than the reverse, and what many a gentleman, I believe, would be proud to tell of."

The name of General Hubert, however, probably did more than this simple testimony of the worthy Louisa's opinion on this point, towards persuading Mr. Egerton that he was mistaken as to the notion he had formed respecting the major's style of play. Nevertheless, not even this could altogether remove a vague feeling of doubt upon the subject, by no means indicative of very high personal esteem for his well-connected countryman. And it gave him satisfaction to think, as he meditated upon the visit he was so unexpectedly engaged to make, to Colonel Beauchamp, that at least he should in some sort be able to repay his hospitality by giving a little attention to the game, if it should happen that he and the military consort of the authoress should chance to play together during the time his own visit lasted.

CHAPTER XXV.

ALL preliminaries being thus far settled, Mrs. Allen Barnaby very gracefully gave Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp to understand that her anxiety to find herself at Big-Gang Bank would admit of no further delay, her notes having, in fact, exactly reached the point at which the sight of that "magnificent piece of social machinery, an actively organised slave plantation" (as Judge Johnson had elegantly described it in congress) was become absolutely necessary.

This was quite enough to set the active mind and body of Mrs. Beauchamp into such a state of excitement, as very speedily brought all preparations depending on her to a conclusion; and even the soporific colonel himself was sufficiently awakened by the intelligence to make him, on hearing it, pronounce in a very decided tone, "My dear, the sooner we set off, the better."

But the most remarkable phenomenon produced by these new arrangements, was the manner in which they were received by Annie; for though disappointed in her hopes of an expedition up the Mississippi, and doomed moreover to endure at her own home the presence of the whole Barnaby, *plus* Tornorino party, in the oppressive character of guests, it did not appear to vex her at all. It was, indeed, quite astonishing to see how well she bore it.

The business of departure therefore was both rapidly and smoothly brought to a conclusion. Mrs. Carmichael wheezed forth her hopes of seeing them all again, and Patty's elegant and pious friend, Mrs. General Gregory, declared that nothing should prevent her forthwith repairing to their plantation mansion, in order to receive the whole party on their leaving Big-Gang Bank.

The journey produced no events particularly interesting, which might partly be owing to the lassitude produced by the heat of the weather; for though it was certainly a great relief to quit the glare of New Orleans for scenes in which they had trees instead of houses to look at, the exertion of travelling equalised the matter, and the Europeans of the party had little energy for anything beyond fanning themselves, and sipping iced lemonade from stage to stage as they proceeded.

At length, however, this unavoidable martyrdom was over, the melting journey at an end, and all the luxuries of a rich planter's establishment around them.

In point of picturesque beauty, Big-Gang Bank had little to boast of, being a wide-spreading brick edifice, situated in a large square inclosure of coarse, ill-kept grass, surrounded by a zigzag fence, and with nothing in sight but a considerable expanse of flat country, covered with sugar-canes, cotton-bushes, and rice-grounds, diversified at intervals by clusters of negro huts. The mansion itself consisted of a lofty centre, and two low wings, the former surmounted by a sort of pointed pediment, in the middle of which yawned a huge round aperture, containing the enormous dinner-bell. The wings, which had no second story, displayed a row of at least a dozen windows in each, and not only along this lengthy front, but round the whole building ran a deep portico, which being lined with orange-trees and pomegranates, redeemed it in some degree from the scorched-up aspect produced by the ill-complexioned material of the building and the defective verdure of the lawn which surrounded it.

But it was not on the expanse of her mansion, or on the beauty of the flowering shrubs which adorned it. that Mrs. Beauchamp

chiefly prided herself, though well aware that it was all very first-rate elegant. But her eye sparkled as the carriages containing her numerous guests drove up to the portico, and she perceived the centre door that was thrown open to receive them, crowded with gaily-clad negroes. About a dozen of these, male and female, ran forward as the equipages approached, ready to perform all offices, necessary and unnecessary, that might be required of them.

Their light summer garb, more picturesque than abundant, was for the most part white, perfectly clean, and set off to great advantage by the mixture of bright-coloured calico introduced into their girdles and turban-like head gear.

"You did not look, I expect, for such an elegant gang of domestic niggers in any private gentleman's dwelling, did you, my dear lady?" said the smiling Mrs. Beauchamp, addressing her most important guest. "But these are not the one half of the household gang, and not any single one of them have any more to do with the canes, or the cotton, or the rice, than you have."

"It is indeed a most splendid establishment!" replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, raising her hand as in admiration.

"It is a great loss as to labour, in course," resumed Mrs. Beauchamp; "but my colonel is a very liberal, high-minded gentleman, and chooses that his wife and his daughter should live in all luxury, according as they have a right to do. Doubtless, dear lady," she continued, with a pitying shake of the head, "you have heard and read enough about the want of helps among the American ladies; and it serves them right too, there is no denying it, for thinking of such a thing as turning a free-born American into a drudge, to come and go at anybody's bidding. True it is, no doubt of it, and very fitting too, that they should want helps; but now, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, ma'am, I flatter myself you will have an opportunity of making your own observations, and finding out for yourself the alone reason why so many of the finest ladies in the world are often forced to do their own dirty work, and will be able to do justice to the real gentility of those who know better what is due to themselves. Walk in, dear ladies, walk in, and pray remember that you may all of you just ring and call as much as you like. Indeed, you'll only have to clap your hands, ladies, in order to bring as many domestic blacks about you as you can want or wish for. Pray make no scruples, and don't fear that you are taking them from out-door work, for they are never sent into the grounds from year's end to year's end, except just for punishment, and then they get their flogging in the fields, which is a deal better, you know, than having it to do in the house."

This speech, which was begun as they left the carriage, lasted the whole length of an enormous hall which traversed the building from front to back, affording by its perfect shade, and the current of air which passed through it, a very agreeable contrast to the heat, which the travellers had been enduring.

"Oh goodness! What a delightful place!" exclaimed Madame Tornorino. "I hope, ma'am, you mean to sit down here a little?"

"This is beautiful, to be sure!" chimed in the greatly comforted Matilda, beginning to fan herself anew with refreshed strength and violence.

"Beautiful?" repeated Mrs. Allen Barnaby, in an accent that seemed to scorn the insufficient epithet. "It is noble! It is magnificent!"

Mrs. Beauchamp, with patriotic and domestic pride both busy at her heart, looked round upon the admiring guests, as if she could have kissed them all.

"Oh my!" she gaily exclaimed, "you mustn't talk about this being beautiful. It is just large, and lofty, and fresh,—that's all. But you, my dear Mrs. Allen Barnaby, have taught your own clear-sighted way of seeing everything to your whole party, and I'm sure it's a glory and a pleasure to show you anything. But now please to walk in here, ladies. This is what we call number one, because it is our littlest drawing-room. But that's the proper way to begin, you know. We ought always to begin with the beginning, and so I always bring new visitors in here first. Now do please to sit down, all of you, and refresh yourselves. Major Allen Barnaby and Monsieur must be so kind, I expect, to excuse pa's stealing off so. It has always been his way, gentlemen, and we mustn't look for his changing it now. If it's twenty times in a year that he goes from home, the first thing he does upon coming back to it, is to go into a little dark room of his own picking and choosing, and then he lights a cigar, and gets a nigger or two to bring him a mint julep, with a nice bit of ice in it; and then, gentlemen, he sends off for his confidential looker, who presently puts him up to everything that has happened on the estate since he went; and I don't believe he'd lay down in his bed till he had heard all this, if it was ever so."

The major and his son-in-law hastened to assure their amiable hostess that they should be immeasurably sorry if their being at Big-Gang Bank should in any degree interfere with the habits of Colonel Beauchamp; all of which having been said with the most perfect politeness on all sides, the whole party sat down on the various couches and sofas that seemed to invite them, and then Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp clapped her hands. Upon this two handsome negro-girls made their appearance, side by side, at the door, and with a movement so similar and simultaneous that they rather looked like one piece of machinery than two self-moving human beings.

"Sangaree, whisky, melons, ice, and cakes," said Mrs. Beauchamp, in a voice of authority that sounded a little like a word of command given on parade, and ere the eye could wink, the two figures became invisible.

"And this is the country," exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with emotion, "which the audacity of English travellers has dared to libel as inferior to their own! I blush to think that I am an Englishwoman."

"Never mind that, dearest Mrs. Allen Barnaby!" replied her amiable hostess, in a tone of the most friendly spirit of consolation. "That is a sort of misfortune, you know, that nobody can help, let them wish it ever so much. But this I will say, that if ever a lady deserved to be a free-born American female, it is you yourself!"

"Dear, kind Mrs. Beauchamp!" returned the travelling lady. "How sweet it is to hear you say so! I would not exchange such praise as those words contain for the richest diadem that ever encircled the tyrannical head of a European monarch!"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby uttering these words, appeared to be overpowered by her feelings, and drew forth her pocket-handkerchief to catch the drops that emotion forced to flow. Fortunately, the black automatons reappeared at this moment, each bearing a tray, the twin of which was in the hands of the other.

Those who have never partaken of iced sangaree when the thermometer stands at a hundred, cannot be trusted to calculate its power of soothing the spirits. Mrs. Allen Barnaby tasted and was revived—drank freely—for it is a mixture that, like Cowper's tea, "cheers, but not inebriates," and was herself again—gay, animated, inspired, and eloquent.

"Well, now!" said Mrs. Beauchamp, looking cheerfully round her, "I do think we shall be as pleasant a party as ever was got together. I wonder what has become of the young English gentleman, Mr. Egerton? I heard him say positively that he would be here to-day, and unless he has right-down lost himself some way or another, I expect he ought to be here by this time; for I calculate he must have come to the same point by steam as we did, only setting off by the next turn. What's that, Annie?" she continued, looking out of the window as conveniently as she could without approaching it. "Is not that a gentleman on horseback?"

"I don't know, mamma," said the young lady, suddenly passing through a pair of folding doors into an inner room. I grieve that she should so have said, because next to Mrs. Allen Barnaby herself, Annie Beauchamp is the heroine of the present narrative; and as the words thus uttered were not true, I feel compelled to acknowledge that she does not altogether deserve the dignified position in which my partiality has induced me to place her.

Annie Beauchamp said that she did not know whether the approaching figure were that of a gentleman on horseback, whereas she did know perfectly well, not only that it was a gentleman on horseback, but that, moreover, the gentleman was Frederic Egerton. Whatever might have been the motive for such falsification, it was of course indefensible, and I must leave her to the mercy of those

to whom I have been compelled by my love of historic truth to make this disclosure.

A few minutes more, and the fact became evident to all, and Mrs. Beauchamp prepared herself again to do the honours of her mansion, her sangaree, and her slaves, in such a manner as to elevate her country in the eyes of another European, to the highest pitch that it was possible for her to reach.

The young man paid his compliments to the circle assembled, with his usual graceful ease, although it did not appear to consist exactly of the party he expected to find there. Perhaps he was disappointed because Colonel Beauchamp was not himself present to welcome him.

Neither the colonel nor his daughter, however, made their appearance till the hour of dinner; the former being engaged exactly in the manner his lady had described, and the latter choosing for some reason or other to pass the interval in her own room.

It was really a pretty room, that allotted to the heiress of Big-Gang Bank, for it was decorated according to her own fancy. It was on the ground-floor, at the north-east corner of one of the wings, and opened by two large French windows upon a very small, but bright and fragrant flower-garden, inclosed for, and kept sacred to, her own especial use and benefit.

And here all Annie's private hours were passed, and all her private studies carried on; and, considering that she did not deal in necromancy, or any other branch of the art usually denominated black, a very remarkable degree of mystery attended the prosecution of these studies.

Annie Beauchamp had for the last year of her life been very busily engaged in educating herself; having with a good deal of acuteness discovered that during the time others had been engaged in teaching her, she had learnt nothing. But in order to perform this double part of tutor and pupil, it was absolutely necessary that she should not be watched; for as everybody excepting herself considered her education not only completed, but completed on the most liberal and extended scale, her own exertions would have been treated as a work of supererogation, which it would be quite as well to leave alone. Moreover, this self-education was carried on in a style that would indisputably have brought upon her as many reproofs for neglecting her studies in one line, as for prosecuting them unnecessarily in another.

Annie had cost her adoring parents a vast number of "quarters" in all the most approved branches of American female accomplishments, to no single one of which she had devoted an hour since she left "college." Algebra and mathematics she wholly neglected; her plane trigonometry she tore into fragments, and made her own little slave, Nina, sweep it all away: astronomy fared not much better; and all the elements of all the ologies were crammed into a

basket together, and carried off in company with the trigonometry. From both music and painting, which had of course been "quartered" upon her as long as she remained in other hands than her own, she also turned resolutely away, not in distaste, but despair. In short, Annie Beauchamp did nothing but read, and that she did with an avidity and perseverance for which nothing but her unlimited credit with a New York bookseller could have supplied materials.

To the scene of all this quiet study, the eccentric little girl now repaired; but instead of taking a book, she placed herself at the greatest possible distance from her reading corner; and seating herself in a low chair, with her fairy feet upon a somewhat high footstool, her crossed arms resting on her lap, and her absent eyes fixed upon the floor, she would have made as pretty a study for the attitude commonly described by the words "nose and knees," as ever was seen. Ere she had indulged many minutes in this half-sulky, half-happy position, which at that moment was particularly well suited to her state of mind, her enjoyment of it was disturbed by the entrance of Nina.

This Nina was a negro-girl exactly of her own age, who had been commanded to play with her in infancy, and elected to the especial honour of being the young heiress's personal attendant from the time of her return from school. She was not suffered, however, to leave the plantation when her young mistress went from home; because, as the confidential manager of the household gang informed his master, she was so "darnation 'cute," that she'd be sure to bring home mischief if she did.

The black and white girls, therefore, had been separated for two months, and despite the tremendous interval between the heiress and the slave, the pleasure of meeting was mutual, though perhaps not quite equal in degree. Annie had many things to think about; Nina had but one, and that one was her young mistress.

The black girl entered through the open window with the light spring of an antelope, and dropping upon her knees before Annie's footstool, seized first upon one delicate hand, and then upon the other, to kiss and fondle them, while she exclaimed in English, as pure as that spoken by her well-read young mistress—

"It is like shade in the midst of the rice-ground."

"What is like shade, Nina?" said Annie, smiling kindly on her.

The girl sighed deeply, and did not answer.

"What is like shade, Nina?" repeated her mistress.

"The sight of something very dear and long unseen," replied the girl. "But it is not like the shade of the free forest," she continued, looking up to the face of Annie, with an expression of great suffering.

"What is the matter with you, Nina?" said the young lady,

looking with much surprise at the troubled countenance of her pretty slave. "Do you mean to say that you want me to give you your freedom?"

"My freedom? Do you think, Miss Annie, that it is possible I could ever wish to be free whilst I belong to you? Oh, do not think it! Such a wish never crossed my mind for a single instant since I have been old enough to know what wishing meant."

"Then what *do* you mean, my dear girl? And what does that tear mean, Nina? Why do you look upon me so very sadly? I never saw you in this humour before," said Annie, looking earnestly at the dark face that rested on her knees.

"How should I be able to tell you?" replied the girl, evasively. "Even you, Miss Annie, sometimes seem hardly to know what is passing in your own mind; and do you wonder that with all my ignorance, I should not know more than you do?"

"What have you been reading, Nina, since I went away?" demanded Annie, looking grave. "I think you have been wasting your time with some of those foolish novels. Foolish for you, they certainly are, for they cannot by possibility convey to you a single useful idea."

"I have not.—But never mind now, dearest Miss Annie, about my reading. It matters little what a negro-girl reads, so that she leave not her work undone."

"But why do you look so sad, Nina? You have not told me that, you know," said her young mistress, looking curiously in the large eyes that had not yet been able to wink away their superfluous moisture. "Why are your eyes full of tears, my poor girl?"

"Why the truth is, Miss Annie," said the young slave, "I am sorry you are come home, though I love to see you. I was so glad when I heard you were going to be very happy, and to travel about; and that is the reason, you know, why I may be sorry you are come home again so soon."

"I should scarcely have thought you would have cried about it either," said Annie, looking puzzled for a moment. "But you were always an odd girl, Nina, though a good one too, as times go. But there—go now, I can't talk to you any longer, for I am thinking of something else. You may go into my bedroom, Nina, and unpack all my things, and bring all the books you find into this room. There—go."

At first hearing the word "go," the girl had sprung upon her feet, but even after hearing it a second time, she still lingered.

"I will go," she said, but without moving.

"What ails you, Nina?" said Annie, laughing; "I think you are bewitched. Why do you not go where I bid you? What a spoilt girl you are, Nina! Tell me now, naughty blacky, ought I not to send you to the rice ground?"

"If you did, Miss Annie," she replied, shaking her head, "perhaps I should go more quickly."

She now moved a step or two towards the door, but before she reached it, turned round and said—

"Will you not go, Miss Annie, and pay a visit to the good lady at Portico Lodge?"

"To be sure I shall go and pay a visit to the good lady at Portico Lodge?" replied Annie. "Did you ever know me neglect my kind old friend? But you do not want me to go this very moment, Nina, do you?"

Again the young slave stood silent for a while before she answered, and looked irresolute and embarrassed, as if she had something on her mind that she wished to express, but for some reason or other did not choose to utter it.

"What are you dreaming about, Nina?" said Annie, laughing. "I do believe, girl, that you are in love."

Nina shook her head, sighing, however, at the same time so very deeply, that her mistress laughed again, saying—

"Nay, then, it is so, is it, my pretty blacky? Well, Nina, I hope the beloved loves again, and there is no great doubt of that, seeing that you are acknowledged on all hands, you know, to be the beauty of the whole plantation. But he must be a very nice fellow, Nina, or I shall not give my consent."

"Oh my! Miss Annie!" returned the girl, tears again starting to her eyes, "I wish you would not talk so idly! Go and see good Madam Whitlaw as soon as ever you can. She is a kind lady, and she loves you dearly, Miss Annie; and besides, she knows everything and everybody, and will be likely, if any one can, to——"

Here Nina suddenly stopped short, rapidly turning her eyes away as if to avoid meeting those of her mistress, which were fixed upon her.

"If you are not in love, Nina, you are most certainly gone or going out of your wits," said Miss Beauchamp, waving her off. "And if you don't go away directly, it is very likely that I shall lose mine; for all you do say is as unintelligible as all you do not say. Besides, Nina, I tell you I am thinking of something else."

Once again the black girl heaved a very heavy sigh, and then retreated, leaving her mistress less disposed to meditate upon her mystery and her melancholy than she probably would have been, had she not been, as she said, thinking of something else.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE day following this large influx of visitors at Big-Gang Bank, witnessed the sending off of half-a-dozen notes containing dinner invitations to the six principal proprietors in the neighbourhood.

There was a seventh, concerning whom Mrs. Beauchamp and the colonel differed in opinion.

This seventh great proprietor, within a circle of five miles round Big-Gang Bank, was a certain maiden lady of the name of Whitlaw, the same whom the young slave, Nina, was so anxious her mistress should visit. For many years she had been known in the neighbourhood as Mrs. Clio Whitlaw; but this singular Christian name had been dropped on the death of a widowed sister-in-law, and the greatest female landowner in America had now become simply Mrs. Whitlaw.

She was a person of rather eccentric habits, but universally beloved and respected throughout the neighbourhood. Of her origin but little was known, her immense fortune having been left her by a young nephew, who had himself died almost immediately after he had come into possession of it. Some circumstances relating to this nephew, and to the manner in which he both obtained and bequeathed his fortune, became the subject of a narrative published in England some few years ago; but of this notoriety Mrs. Clio Whitlaw was herself wholly unconscious; and so great was the humble simplicity of her character, that she would have thought it greatly more probable that her dog Watch should have been put into a book than herself.

It was on the question of inviting or not inviting this lady that the colonel and Mrs. Beauchamp now differed, the former being strongly in favour of the measure, and the latter as strongly against it. A good many *pro* and *con* arguments were uttered on the occasion, which it is unnecessary to repeat, the whole strength of Mrs. Beauchamp's objections resting in the words, "she is too vulgar, colonel; she is, indeed, a great deal too vulgar to be introduced to such company as we have got here. Only just think what it would be if Mrs. Allen Barnaby was to describe Miss Clio Whitlaw in her book as a first-rate American lady?"

"Mrs. Allen Barnaby is much too superior-minded a lady to do any such thing, my dear," replied the colonel. "Her thoughts are altogether fixed on the great national question of slaves or no slaves, and that being the case, there is small chance that she should turn aside from her wise and enlightened reasonings upon this important subject for the sake of writing down the queer ways of Miss Clio?"

"That is true, too, colonel; I can't say but what it is," rejoined the lady; "but do only remember the look of her cap, and the make of her gown! and then think of the beautiful dresses of Mrs. Allen Barnaby?"

"And do you, my dear, just think of the mischief our queer old neighbour is for ever doing by upholding the Christian privileges of the slaves, as she calls them, and of the good chance there may be that the great cleverness that this writing lady brings forward on the subject may work a change in her foolish notions; and

then you may just as well remember at the same time, if you please, that nobody ever heard who Mrs. Whitlaw's heirs are to be; and then it may come into your head, perhaps, that it may be best not to affront her by leaving her out."

"Have your own way, then, colonel," was hereupon the conclusion of the dialogue, and the invitation to Mrs. Whitlaw was despatched with the rest. During the three days which intervened before the arrival of this first great inaugural dinner-party, the company assembled at Big-Gang Bank amused themselves in various ways, according to their respective inclinations. Mrs. Allen Barnaby walked forth in the cool of the evening with the observant Colonel Beauchamp at her side, and her note-book open in her hand, taking notes upon every object that he pointed out to her especial attention.

"*Perfection of agricultural science*," were the words inscribed after his showing her how carefully the rice grounds were kept in order, that the crop, as he coaxingly observed, might be as perfect as it ought to be for the London market; and when they reached the negro village in which the largest portion of his slaves dwelt, and found them all dressed out in their best attire, and dancing away to the squeaking of one of their own fiddles, while all the teeth of all the tribe were displayed by one broad universal grin, he did not think it necessary to mention that this exhibition of excessive gaiety was got up for her especial benefit—but permitted her to write "None but those who have witnessed the blissful scene with their own eyes, can form an idea of that unequalled moral felicity which is enjoyed by the negro slaves of the United States of America. Their lives are passed in the enjoyment of every blessing that the heart of man can desire." As sentences such as these became multiplied on her pages, the devotion of the colonel and his lady increased to such a degree, that Major Allen Barnaby, who thought that as a looker-on he saw the very pith and marrow of the game, began to hint to his lady that it would be a pity not to put the affection of their wealthy hosts to the proof at once, by simply requesting a loan of a couple of thousand pounds or so. The answer he received from his wife upon making this proposal, speaks volumes in honour of the acute nature of feminine observation, when stimulated by the lively light of genius. This answer was preceded by a little laugh, and then followed these words—

"And you really think that the old gentleman would come down with his cash, Donny, do you? Ask him, if you have a mind that the beautiful bubble should burst about your ears at once, and besprinkle you with something more disagreeable than soap-suds; but if you think it as well to let me go on my own way, just let it alone, and take my word for it that as the love of his dear dollars is the beginning and end of his love of me, the asking him to part with them would cure the tender passion at once. I have never seen anybody, either at home or abroad, Donny, your own

handsome self not excepted, my dear, who seemed to me to dote upon the needful so heartily as this sleepy colonel. Will you believe me, major, or will you not?"

"I should be a precious great fool, my dear," he replied, "after all that I have seen of you already, should I begin to doubt you now. Have it your own way, my Barnaby, and I will just go quietly on with the piquet. I suspect you are right about his affection for his dollars, for I see he hates losing. But we can't help that, you know; it won't do for us to be here for nothing."

"Oh no! certainly not. I leave that all in your own hands. Of course you don't let luck run against him the whole night. Winning one game is like mixing one little bit of leaven into a whole bushel of dough. He begins every game afterwards under the effects of it, and you must just give him enough to prevent him turning short round upon you, and saying that he had rather not play any more."

The major chucked his wife under the chin, gave her a very satisfactory nod, and so the discussion ended.

The rest of the party managed very tolerably well; what with the novelty of the scene, the prodigious quantity of eating and drinking, and the extreme hospitality of their entertainers, they contrived to pass those days pleasantly enough. Miss Matilda Perkins was perhaps the only one of the party not exactly satisfied with the change from New Orleans. *There* a vast many gentlemen had felt it was advantageous to be decidedly among the popular English party, even though a little flirtation with Miss Matilda was the price they were obliged to pay for it; but *here* the only single gentleman of the company had most decidedly devoted all his Perkins's partiality to the elder sister, appearing to forget altogether that any such person as the interesting Matilda existed. Tornorino, excepting during the hours in which by special agreement he was in attendance upon his father-in-law, appeared wholly devoted to the pleasant occupations of making himself comfortable, and keeping his wife in good humour; while his lady amused herself much to her heart's content, in demonstrating her conjugal affection, dressing herself in orange blossoms, and watching the odd ways of the blackamoors. And Egerton, how did he amuse himself? Did he philosophise with Mrs. Allen Barnaby on the admirable effects of slavery, or did he recreate his spirits by playing piquet with the major? No! He was as little inclined for the one occupation as for the other, and actually wasted the time that he might have spent in becoming acquainted with their strongly-marked and peculiarly interesting characters, in silently watching the domestic arrangements of a slave plantation, in conversing on terms a little less hostile than heretofore with Annie, and in making acquaintance with her young slave Nina.

It is impossible to deny that during this process his dislike of the American heiress became considerably less inveterate than it

had been during the early part of their acquaintance; but the most important step made towards the removal of this very un-amiable feeling was by the lucky discovery that the young lady was not endowed with any accomplishments whatever. She never even hinted at having the slightest intention of taking a degree; and this species of extraordinary humility, together with the discovery of a few other qualities and peculiarities that he certainly rather liked than not, induced him to talk to her a good deal, and to pay her altogether a good deal of attention. The terms too, on which she seemed to be living with the interesting young girl, whose personal attendance upon her was, as may be observed in all plantation families, greatly more close and intimate than can be found in the same relation elsewhere, the tone of this, and the mutual affection which so evidently existed between them, tended very greatly to remove the feeling of dislike which he had conceived for all slaveholding individuals whatever. One consequence of this was, that he not only talked a good deal to Annie, but to Nina too. This delicately-formed young girl, with her large soft eyes, and beautiful teeth, was certainly as pretty a creature as it was possible for a black girl to be; and if an individual instance might be taken as proof, her intelligence might have gone far towards settling the disputed question on the power and extent of negro intellect. It is true, indeed, that her mistress's remarkable neglect of all the higher branches of abstract science, had prevented this touchstone from being applied to her powers of mind; but all that it had been in her power to acquire she had acquired rapidly, and Egerton's carefully cultivated acquaintance with her, while it went far towards exonerating Annie herself from the odious stigma which his heart attached to the holding a slave, convinced him more strongly than ever that there was nothing to be found in the nature of the negro race to justify in the slightest degree the atrocious tyranny by which they have been separated from their fellow-creatures, and branded as beings of an inferior race. Nothing is more interesting, when such thoughts and speculations occupy the mind, than a personal investigation of the subject by means of conversing with some individual specimen of this stranger race, whenever accident gives an opportunity, and it was for this reason, as well as for a slight latent wish to know a little more about the mistress, that Frederic Egerton bestowed so large a portion of his attention upon the maid.

The first two or three days of this rather singular *reunion* at Big-Gang Bank were thus passed by the different individuals of which it was composed, all of them, perhaps, looking forward with more or less curiosity to the enlargement of the circle by the grand dinner-party of which they had pretty constantly heard mention. It was on the evening of the third day, which had been one of extreme heat, but which, as the sun went down, became delightful by the aid of a gentle breeze that Annie, either moved thereto by the repeated suggestions of her sable monitor, or by her own kind-

hearted inclination to be civil to her queer old friend, proposed to the ladies that they should take a walk on the extensive light brown esplanade before the house, which it was the custom of the country to denominate the "lawn." All the party, gentlemen as well as ladies, seemed to relish the proposal exceedingly, and in truth the air at that moment blowing through the open blinds, was such as to tempt the laziest of mortals to a stroll. Not, however, that either the major or his son-in-law would have yielded to the temptation had not Colonel Beauchamp been still fast asleep; but that being the case, they too obeyed the summons of the young lady, and sallied forth with the rest into the portico, rambling onward over the almost crackling surface of the much-scorched lawn.

At the end of the inclosure they reached a gate, upon the latch of which Annie placed her hand, saying to her mother as she did so—

"I will just step over, mamma, if you please, and inquire for Mrs. Whitlaw. I should not like to meet her at dinner till I had called upon her. I will be back again in time to make tea."

"Why should we not all go, Annie?" returned her mother. "You know the old lady is very fond of being visited by strangers, and I think our friends may like to see the place; it is quite a curiosity in some ways. What say you, gentlemen and ladies?"

"Why, as for me, my dear lady," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, to whom Mrs. Beauchamp had seemed to chiefly address herself, "I must confess that in this hot climate I do not feel equal to a great deal of walking. But don't mind me. I can return alone."

"My!" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, perfectly frightened at the proposal. "Fancy me letting you walk back alone! I will go back with you with the very greatest of pleasures; and, indeed, I never should have thought of your risking your most precious health by a long walk, but Mrs. Whitlaw's beautiful place isn't more than ten minutes from this."

"Oh! well then, we won't part company," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, obligingly. And thus Annie, considerably to her surprise, and perhaps not very much to her satisfaction, found herself at the head of an invading army of nine persons, preparing to make their way into the territory of her old friend, who she well knew was not in the habit, notwithstanding her enormous wealth, of being at all times ready to receive company. But this little embarrassment served the young lady rightly; for she had been plotting, and plotting feebly—a weakness which generally insures, and always merits, failure. Had she, when the wish for making this visit seized her, quietly invited her still favoured *protégée*, Miss Louisa, to accompany her, and only contrived to make the request in the hearing of Mr. Frederic Egerton, there is every reason to suppose that she would have been accompanied to the house of her friend exactly in the manner she wished; but as it was, she had no choice left her but to proceed with her mamma's cortège to penetrate into the peaceful precincts of Portico Lodge.

"We are rather a large party, to be sure," observed Mrs.

Beauchamp, as they proceeded ; “ but our Annie is such a favourite that she may do anything, the odd old lady would never be angry with her. Indeed, the people in the neighbourhood do say,” continued Mrs. Beauchamp, with a smile, “ that Annie has got a very tolerably good chance of coming in for a share of the great fortune she will leave behind her, for she has not a relation in the world, and it is quite certain that she takes more pleasure in our Annie’s company than in that of anybody else. Our girl will be a fine fortune altogether if that should happen.”

Miss Beauchamp was, at the moment when this was spoken, in rather earnest conversation with Mr. Egerton ; but she suddenly stopped, and turning to her mother said, with a good deal of eagerness—

“ I wish, mamma, you would never say that again, and likewise that you would never think it. I *know*, as I have often told you before, mamma, that you are mistaken. Mrs. Whitlaw has no relations, but she has friends as dear to her as the very nearest.”

“ Well, Annie, you always scold me about it, I know,” replied her mother, laughing ; “ but it is not my notion only, but that of everybody in the country besides.”

“ It is rather hard upon her,” replied her daughter, colouring, “ that she should run the risk of being abused when she dies, for not doing what she never gave the slightest reason to suppose she intended to do while she lived. But do not let us talk any more about such nonsense. Here we are, and there she is, dear good old soul, busy as usual, tying up her darling Virginian creeper to the pillars of the portico.”

As strange a figure, perhaps, as was ever looked upon was, in effect, now visible, employed as Annie described, with a huge basket of shreds and nails beside her, a hammer in her hand, and her lanky person stretching itself from the top step of a ladder, which rested against a part of the building. Her head was totally uncovered, save by her own gray hair, and her dress, which was of the richest crimson satin, was tucked up through a pair of pocket holes, leaving distinctly visible two very slender legs, terminated by feet nearly as long as themselves.

Patty, the moment she descried this remarkable figure, burst into a shout of unmitigated laughter ; upon which, Mrs. Beauchamp looked vexed, and the eyes of Annie expressed a degree of indignation which immediately suggested to the acute mind of Mrs. Allen Barnaby the necessity of putting some restraint upon their fashionable feelings, in order to conceal the ridicule which must naturally arise in the lively minds of herself and daughter upon the sight of such remote specimens of the natives.

“ Do be quiet, Patty !” she exclaimed, in an accent of chiding. “ I know very well that you are only laughing at me, just because my foot slipped, I suppose ; but because I know it, that is no rule that everybody else should, and therefore I beg you’ll be quiet, and not expose yourself by your wild spirits so.”

As Madame Tornorino had fortunately remarked the heightened colour of Mrs. Beauchamp, and understood thereby something of the effect which her vivacity had produced, her mamma escaped the sharp rejoinder she would otherwise have received in return for her admonition; but Patty, who had a large portion of her female parent's admirable abilities, not only read in the eyes of Annie, and the cheeks of her mother that they were waxing wroth, but remembered with a degree of wisdom almost beyond her years, that she and her Don were just at present living upon the fat of the land, without hearing a word about the costliness of it from her papa and mamma, a variety in their mode of existence that was extremely agreeable; she therefore immediately ceased laughing, and said—

"My goodness, mamma, I wish you wouldn't tumble about so, it is enough to make the dog laugh. But it is just like you, isn't it? You are so uncommonly fat and clumsy."

This lively little dialogue brought them to a spot sufficiently near for the sound of their approach to be audible to the lady on the ladder, who, turning her head, uttered the national "Oh my!" and began to descend as rapidly as her declining strength permitted.

"Now this is kind and neighbour-like," she said, extending both her thin brown hands, one of which was very cordially taken by Mrs. Beauchamp, and the other by Annie.

"I did want to see you again, my pretty dear," she added, smiling kindly upon the latter, "I always think that the place begins to look dismal when you have been a good spell away. And who are all these ladies and gentlemen, Madame Beauchamp? Company from the east I calculate."

"These friends of ours are foreigners, my dear Mrs. Whitlaw," replied Mrs. Beauchamp, "and I have great pleasure in bringing them here, both to show them your beautiful place, and to make you acquainted with them, because I know that you are partial to foreigners."

"I am very glad to see your friends, Mrs. Beauchamp," replied the old lady, with great civility; "but I expect the foreigners that you mean were my dear far-away German friends, for I don't much recollect being greatly taken with any other. But now you'll all be pleased to walk in, I hope, and will take some sangaree and cake; and there is whisky and cigars for the gentlemen. And my dear Miss Annie looks prettier than ever, and that's well, and just as it should be."

The party followed her in through the open French window as she spoke, and seated themselves according to their respective fancies in different parts of the fine large room in which they found themselves, a running accompaniment of welcome from the good lady going on as they did so.

"Pray make yourselves comfortable; take off your bonnets,

ladies, if you please, and your caps too, like me, if you wear 'em. There is nothing so nice as the sweet air blowing about overhead. Perhaps that fat lady (pointing to Mrs. Allen Barnaby) would like this very large chair the best?—Oh my! ma'am! I am afraid you are very hot," she added, looking towards Miss Matilda Perkins, who, as usual, was fanning herself without intermission; "but that is not the way to be cool, ma'am, I can tell you," she continued; "you are working a deal too hard, I expect."

And then she clapped her hands, and two full-grown, and three half-grown negro girls, instantly entered the room.

"Fan the ladies," said Mrs. Whitlaw; whereupon the little girls and the great girls, placed themselves before the lady visitors, and obeyed the orders they had received with a steady measured movement of the solace-giving instrument, which was exceedingly delightful to those to whom it was applied.

"How zealously they perform the task," said Egerton, in a half whisper to Miss Beauchamp. "Is it not a pity that the instrument which their masters apply to their persons in return, should be one productive of as much pain as of pleasure?"

This was said without any fear of giving offence to the fair listener, for the improving acquaintance between the parties had already permitted the subject of negro slavery to be freely discussed.

"The idea of so painful a contrast would not arise here," replied Annie, in the same low tone, "if you knew a little more of Mrs. Whitlaw. That odd exterior conceals the gentlest, kindest heart that was ever given to mortal. She would be much more likely to let her slaves flog her, than suffer any one else to flog them."

"And this is the reason why you love her," said Egerton.

Annie coloured a little, for she knew that he alluded to a discussion in which she had thought proper to utter a few sentences in mitigation of the unqualified reprobation he had expressed against the hateful institution; but she smiled too as she answered—

"I love her for everything she does, for everything has so much self-forgetting kindness in it, that I sometimes think she is sent on earth with that uncaptivating exterior on purpose to show us that we are compound animals, and that beauty and ugliness may both be met in perfection, in the same individual."

"And beauty and goodness in another," he was tempted to reply, as his eye rested upon her; but he did not, and only said, in an accent of very philosophical composure—

"You really make me long to know her, Miss Beauchamp. How can I begin a conversation with her?"

"Talk to her about that beautiful plant that you saw her nailing up," replied Annie. The obedient young man immediately left her side, and approaching the lady of the mansion, said to her with the air of taking much interest in the subject—

"Will you be so kind, Mrs. Whitlaw, as to tell me the name

of the beautiful plant you were so carefully leading in the way it ought to go? It is the most elegant creeper I ever saw."

"Yes, indeed sir, it is a beauty of a plant," replied the old lady, following him into the portico; "but it is only what we call the Virginian trumpet. It is not only its beauty, you must know, that makes me forbid any of my poor nigger creatures to touch it, and that I always do everything to it with my own hands. There is a story, sir, belonging to this plant, that makes every bell that hangs upon it something precious to me."

"I wish you would tell me the story," said Egerton, with a good-humoured smile.

"It might be made a long one," replied Mrs. Whitlaw with a sigh, "but I'll make it short for you, sir. The root of this very 'dential plant that you see growing here, sir, I grubbed up years ago from the smouldering walls of a house that was wickedly burnt to the ground, but that had seen some of my very happiest hours within its walls. I used then to think it a perfect wonder of a place in the way of handsomeness,—though I have found out now that it was just nothing of all that; but this makes no difference in my love, as I look back to it, for it wasn't the place, but the people. They were a set of angels, that's a fact, and the one of them that I loved the dearest, and that used to tend the parent of this tree with her own pretty hands, was as beautiful as the young lady as you came here with, sir, and I don't need to say anything more about her beauty, did I, sir?" concluded the narrator with a smile.

"And do you trace any resemblance between the two young ladies in the qualities of their minds, as well as in the beauty of their persons?" demanded Egerton, but without, however, looking very steadily in the face of the person he addressed.

"Resemblance in their minds?" repeated Mrs. Whitlaw, "meaning, likeness in their goodness, and kindness, and all that? Oh my! one might think you knew 'em both, sir, by having such a thought in your head. Yet they are not just that alike in all ways neither; for my Lotte was the merriest, happiest-hearted little beauty that ever my eyes looked upon, and this pretty dear is often quite the other way as to merriness, being very often altogether the contrary. She never said as much to me, but I've often jealoused that she didn't like having all the poor harmless, black niggers made slaves of. But this I should never have found out, to understand it rightly, if I had not been used to listen so, as I did, to my dear kind friends, the Steinmarks, and Madam Mary, who was an Englisher, sir, like yourself."

"Indeed?" said Frederic Egerton, almost starting; "you think, madam, that Miss Beauchamp is unhappy, is melancholy, because she is surrounded by slaves?"

"Yes, I do, sir," replied the old lady, looking up in his face with a good-humoured twinkle of the eye, that seemed to indicate that she knew he liked to hear as much. "And I can tell you,

easy, why that makes a difference between her and Lotte, just in the very thing where there is no difference at all. But the thing is this, you see, sir: Miss Lotte Steinmark hated and abominated the very name of slavery, and was as gay as a lark, because she came from a country where there was no such a thing ever known or heard of, and she could boast of it, pretty thing, for all was free as waited on them here, and she could sing, dance, and be merry. While this dear child, being an American citizen born, and bound in course not to fault anything, little or big, that she sees in her own glorious native land, seems often, I think, ready to break her heart, because all the people about her, the hard-hearted lookers and all, I expect, are not quite so merciful and good as herself. And the case is the harder, you see, sir, because both her pa and ma, who worship the very ground she treads upon, are altogether going the whole hog in the contrary direction. And how can a young thing like that do anything in such a matter, when all the great landholders round, except my poor old self, perhaps, would burn her alive, as soon as look at her, if they did but guess what was passing in her poor little heart."

Rarely have words produced a stronger or more instantaneous effect than did this speech of the venerable Mrs. Clio Whitlaw upon the mind of young Frederic Egerton. It was as if some hard and impassable barrier had been removed, that had hitherto kept him, despite his growing inclination to overcome it, at a chilling distance from the young American, and had no eyes been there to check such a demonstration of feeling, it is likely enough that he would have fallen on his knees before her, confessed all his unjust aversion, together with some other feelings of rather a contrary kind, and implored her forgiveness on the spot. But this being impossible, the young man contented himself for the present by so placing himself beside one of the pillars of the portico, as to gaze on the innocent young face, whose influence he had so stoutly resisted, without being remarked even by the sharp bright eyes of Miss Patty.

"It is a pretty shady bit, isn't it, sir?" said Mrs. Whitlaw, looking at him complacently, "and I hope you'll come up and enjoy it whenever you like to take a stroll from Big-Gang Bank. Isn't that an unlucky name, sir, after what I have been a telling you? I'll lay a piccinne to a cent, young gentleman, that pretty Annie will free every nigger upon the estate, and then sell every acre of it, and be off to some right-down free country, as soon as ever it comes into her hands. But I mustn't stay talking to you any more now, sir, or Madame Beauchamp will think I don't know what's what."

And so saying, she began disengaging the skirt of her rich satin dress from the pocket-holes, an operation which she had hitherto neglected, and having succeeded in completing it, returned into the saloon.

Though Frederic Egerton once more found himself by the side of Annie during their homeward walk, he was, instead of being

more communicative, considerably more silent than usual. How could he find words to tell her that he adored her because her principles and feelings were in direct opposition to those of her parents? That his heart was ready to swear allegiance to her for ever, because he had made the fortunate discovery that the most important feature in the constitution of the country she had been taught to venerate as the most perfect upon earth, was as hateful to her as to him? It was impossible. The conversation between them, therefore, visibly languished; Egerton perpetually relapsing into silence, after every effort made by his beautiful companion to renew the conversation.

The result of this memorable excursion was, that the young Englishman returned to the house of his American entertainers with a fund of hope and happiness at the bottom of his heart which rendered him, despite his grave exterior, one of the most enviable men in the world; while Annie stole early to her rest with every feeling crushed, every unacknowledged, but most precious hope destroyed. A process greatly similar to what had now taken place in Egerton's mind, had somewhat more rapidly taken place in hers. Though it was quite true that she hated the institution of slavery, Annie loved her country with that species of instinctive filial feeling which it is a sin to be without, and having been taught, very erroneously, to believe that all English people disliked, and what was much worse, despised all Americans, her first feelings towards the young man were quite as hostile as those of the young man towards her. But it was impossible to converse with Frederic Egerton, without perceiving that no such unreasonable assumption of superiority as she had believed inseparable from the English character, made any part of his. She had discovered that what he most hated and condemned was what she most hated and condemned also; and the feeling of having done him injustice, had for some time been acting upon her mind, exactly as it was now acting upon his; giving to every good gift a double power to charm, and bringing justice to act side by side with inclination, in amending the judgment she had first put upon him. But it was only when she saw, or thought she saw, that he liked her greatly less than she liked him, that she became aware how important his opinion had become to her. There was disappointment as well as mortification in the discovery, for she had thought the case was different. But it was sorrow, without any mixture of anger, that she felt upon making it. She was much better calculated to be a proud patriot than a haughty woman; and would have given infinitely more, could she have honestly said that she believed her country right on all the points in which it differed from its parent stock, than to hear it acknowledged by the whole world, *en masse*, that she was the loveliest lady in it. Drooping, heavy-hearted, and self-condemning, but with no shadow of resentful feeling against Egerton, the beautiful American laid her

young head upon her pillow and wept herself to sleep, while the Englishman lay awake, till night gave place to morning, in meditating how, when, and where, he should confess to her that all his future hopes of happiness depended on her consenting to forsake the glories of the Stars and the Stripes, and accept as an atonement for the sacrifice, his heart, his hand, a noble settlement, and the alliance of an ancient English race, whose motto might very honestly have been—

Sans peur, et sans reproche.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE next day brought together the first-rate, high-standing, sharp, elegant, clever, and tip-top fashionable society that was to constitute the dinner-party invited by Colonel and Mrs. Beauchamp, to meet their illustrious European guest. This act of assembling together seemed a very solemn business; nobody, as the circle increased, appeared to think it decorous or proper to smile. The gentlemen compressed their lips, spat and bowed their heads. The ladies made small courtesies, looked grave, and carefully arranged their robes, taking particular care that their drapery should float gracefully on one side only of their persons, according to the hint communicated by a sitting figure in full dress, conveyed to the country in the last number of the *Magasin des Modes*.

At length, however, the whole party being assembled, and as much iced-water and whisky made away with as the season required, Mrs. Colonel Beauchamp thought it advisable, before the dinner was announced, to introduce "Mrs. Major Allen Barnaby" in form, to them all. The scene produced by this was very striking; for there was not a single person present who did not know the obligations she was about to lay them under, and their gratitude bore a very amiable proportion to the benefit which they considered her likely to confer upon them. There are few women who could have gone through this scene with such a perfection of "unblenched majesty," as did Mrs. Allen Barnaby. Had the nature of her forthcoming work, as proclaimed and explained to all, been merely that of a complimentary effusion, extolling the excellences of the country, political, moral, intellectual, physical, and fashionable, and declaring it to be in all these particulars, and every other she could think of, greatly "ahead" of all the other countries in the world, the sensation produced would have been much less vehement. They might have been pleased, probably they would have been very much pleased—but the profound consciousness resting in the inmost recesses of every bosom, that all

this was not a bit more than their due, and that, however good her intentions might be, she must be a darnation smart lady indeed, if she could write up to the pitch they deserved: this consciousness, though it might increase their satisfaction in the contemplation of what she was about to do, would naturally lessen their gratitude, for they would have felt not only that it was no more than their just right, but moreover that it could not by possibility be sufficient to atone for all the European injustice which had preceded it. But the circumstances of the present case were altogether different. The *especial* point she had *especially* undertaken to advocate, was one on which they felt their weakness, while it was that which, ten thousand times beyond all others, they hung upon with a desperate fondness made up of pride, prejudice, the most ardent love of wealth, and the most craven terror of losing it.

“A present Deity” they shout around,

“A present Deity” the *plastered walls* resound—

would be nothing beyond a very fair quotation to exemplify what actually passed on this occasion; and nothing short of the majestic strength of mind with which my heroine was endowed could have enabled her to sustain any appearance of composure under the enthusiastic plaudits which showered upon her head.

How long this might have lasted had dinner not been announced, it is impossible to say, but the flattering clamour was still at its height when the folding-doors of the saloon were thrown open, and a crowd of gaily-dressed negroes outside it gave notice, by their universal grin, that the pleasant business of dining might begin when the company pleased.

This put an instant stop, for the time at least, to the performance of the chorus of adulation which the party had been performing, and the ceremony of marshalling the guests into the dinner-parlour was performed with as little delay as possible.

Though for the most part the brilliant company assembled on this occasion were rather better pleased than usual with themselves and each other, and very fully inclined to do every kind of justice to the splendid hospitality of their entertainers, there were one or two individuals out of the twenty that sat down to table, who would considerably have preferred being elsewhere.

Old Mrs. Whitlaw was one of these. Notwithstanding some trifling deficiencies in this old lady's early education, she had profited, with great natural acuteness, by all the various scenes through which her singular destiny had led her, and was more capable, perhaps, of forming a clear-headed judgment upon the state of affairs in her own particular sphere, than most of her neighbours. Though her views were not sufficiently enlarged for her never to have contemplated very distinctly the absolute abolition of slavery as a national measure, she had long felt persuaded that the way in which the “nigger work,” as she called it, was carried on, would

not answer in the long run. Once or twice, on her first taking possession of the mansion she now inhabited, which was her favourite among several which she inherited—once or twice she had hinted to some of her rich neighbours, that she thought it would be better, “for a good many reasons,” if they would relax a little the severity of their discipline; but this was in every case received with such vehemence of indignation that the same straightforward common-sense which had suggested her observations, very speedily determined her to keep them for the future to herself; and for several years past her pretty strong opinions on the subject had only manifested themselves in the management of her own people, and in occasional confidential *tête-à-têtes* with her young friend Annie. Her own avoidance of all discussion on the subject with her neighbours, had been followed by the same sort of discretion on their parts, and it was now several years since the old lady had heard the subject alluded to in general conversation at all.

Great wealth, for which there is no certain heir, generally produces great consideration to the possessor, and Mrs. Whitlaw had profited by this, more than she was herself aware of; she would otherwise, perhaps, have been less shocked and surprised by the vehemence with which, for the purpose of enlightening Mrs. Allen Barnaby, the increase of severity in discipline was insisted upon by some of the party present as the only mode of averting the mischief which some speculators had threatened, from the rapid increase of the negro population. The old lady got fidgety, and was debating in her own mind whether she should not say that she thought the dinner had made the room rather over-hot, and that she did not feel over-well, when the project of escape was put out of her head by a glance and a smile which she saw hastily and furtively exchanged between two of the sable attendants.

It is so universally the custom, wherever slaves make part of an establishment, to treat them as if they were literally stocks and stones, incapable of hearing or of seeing anything said or done before them, that in this case, as in many others, the subject of their own condition was as freely discussed while they were serving at table, as if no such animals had been in the room.

Old Mrs. Whitlaw was too much used to this mode of proceeding for the uncomfortable feelings she experienced to have been produced or even increased by their presence, and it was purely by accident that her eyes had been directed towards the men between whom the above-mentioned look and smile had been exchanged. But the moment she saw it, a strong feeling of suspicion arose in her mind, that one of those movements of resistance which occasionally startle slave-holders, and which act with the frightful but useless energy of a limb convulsed by intolerable pain, was approaching among the slaves of Colonel Beauchamp, and the old lady would have given pretty considerably many dollars, could she at that very moment have transported herself into the midst of her own slaves,

for the purpose of having a little confidential conversation with them. But as this was impossible, she resolved to sit still and quietly look on.

Another individual to whom the splendid banquet, and the popular theme discussed around it, produced a degree of suffering that it required some philosophy to endure, was Annie. No opportunity during the whole of that long morning had occurred for anything to pass between Frederic Egerton and herself which could persuade her that the conclusion to which she had come the evening before respecting him was erroneous.

It was not that she doubted his admiration of her—that would certainly have been difficult, inasmuch as every glance of his eyes betrayed it; for the fascination of her beauty rendered the not looking at her a task, which, however often resolved upon, he found it impossible to perform. Annie was not wholly unconscious of this; but a profound conviction that his having seen her surrounded by slaves, and an agent, however innocently, in the degradation of the race whom, she well knew, he considered in all respects as the equal children of the same Almighty Father, had taken possession of her mind; she considered herself as one stigmatised in his eyes by a blot that could never be removed; and all her energy of mind was now turned to the task of avoiding him as much as possible at present, and forgetting him wholly when he was no longer near. But it was impossible, even for the furtherance of this very desirable object, for Annie to leave the room while the dinner lasted; she too, therefore, submitted to endure its heat and its noise, giving no other indication that she was ill at ease, than the somewhat more than common paleness of her cheek betrayed.

So the party went on with every appearance of universal satisfaction; Mrs. Allen Barnaby's health was drunk, and prosperity to planters and plantations toasted with three times three. And then the ladies retired, they having remained thus long solely in compliment to the heroine of the fête; a compliment which was acknowledged by Mrs. Allen Barnaby's drawing forth from her bag her little note-book, and very evidently employing herself by inscribing therein some of the wise and very sublime maxims which had been uttered by the gentlemen present.

On re-entering the drawing-room, the most consequential ladies of the party immediately crowded around her, beseeching that she would favour them with her autograph, or, if it were possible, with a few words written in their albums. This was the first time that such a request had ever been made to our heroine, except in her dreams; and the graceful manner in which she bowed and smiled her acquiescence, was really admirable. This very gracious and ready compliance with her wishes was no sooner made known, than nearly every lady present flew to the secret corner in which on entering she had deposited her receptacle for wit; which, in fact, every lady who arrived that day had done, with the exception of

Mrs. Whitlaw (who had, as she candidly confessed, no taste whatever for learning); and having drawn it thence, speedily surrounded the illustrious authoress with a perfect galaxy of brilliant volumes, red, green, blue, and yellow, each in succession eagerly spread open before her to receive the valued ornament of her name.

On the first page offered to her, Mrs. Allen Barnaby modestly inscribed that name and nothing more; but perceiving a look of disappointed hope in the countenance of the fair lady who had presented it, she (not manfully, but womanfully) called upon her genius to help her, and resolutely determined, notwithstanding the multitude of the rainbow volumes around her, that every one of them should bear witness of her extraordinary talents.

With a charming smile, she drew again towards her the book in which she had written her name, and wrote above it,

Immortal country, hail!

Finding by the universal "My!" which broke in various notes of admiration from the fair petitioners, that this was exactly the sort of thing they wanted, she continued in the same strain till her task was accomplished. She found no difficulty whatever in producing the slight degree of variety which she deemed necessary, and one lady carried away with her the novel phrase—

Success to the Stripes and the Stars!

another—

The extinguisher of the Old World and the candle of the New!—

THE UNION.

This conceit brought down another shower of the same eloquent monosyllables, and "Oh my!" resounded through the room. It is not necessary to indite every *tour de force* by which Mrs. Allen Barnaby proved her powers of extemporary composition, for though all admirable, they were, it must be confessed, exceedingly alike in sentiment, if not in expression; but in the last, she seemed indeed to surpass herself, and greater than ever was the delight manifested when the happy owner of the last album presented, read aloud these words—

May lawful slavery survive, as long as the sun and moon endureth!

It may easily be imagined that, upon the gentlemen making their appearance, they were immediately made to share in the pleasure which these various inscriptions were so well calculated to produce, and once again Mrs. Allen Barnaby found herself the object of admiration which amounted to enthusiasm.

As soon as the expression of their feelings had in some degree subsided, Colonel Beauchamp observed, that their having met with the most admirable lady in Europe, was no good cause why his sporting neighbours should not be indulged with their usual game

at whist, or Boston; a hint which immediately led to the summoning sundry negroes, and setting forth sundry card-tables.

While these arrangements were making, Major Allen Barnaby wandered about the room making conversation, of which a jocose sort of sketch respecting his own caprices about playing at cards formed the principal theme. He laughed heartily, as he declared that it often and often happened to him, that he could not make up his mind to think of any single rule of playing, and hardly to know one card from another; while at another time, if the humour seized him, he could go on at it four and twenty hours together, and never feel tired a bit.

"Well, sir," was the reply from one grandee to whom these little personal peculiarities were revealed, "we must hope that the humour may be on you this evening, for there are two or three here that never find themselves in company without choosing to have a go against the four aces."

Two tables were speedily made up, at one of which two ladies took their places, and the stakes were fixed at a moderate sum; at the other, four gentlemen were to play, and at this table, the fixing the stakes was left to themselves.

"Which party will you join, Major Allen Barnaby?" demanded Colonel Beauchamp, adding very politely—"In course, sir, as a stranger, we should one and all be happy, I expect, to leave the fix to your own choice, putting out of sight our complaisance to your excellent lady."

Out of the four other gentlemen about to sit down, two appeared rather anxious that the whimsical major, to whose account of himself they had been listening, should take his place with the ladies, and one of them said bluntly—

"It would hardly be fair, Major Allen Barnaby, sir, to let you, with the careless ways you talk about, sit down at this table; because I, for one, always play a pretty considerable brisk stake."

"That's the only way to keep me awake, sir," replied the major, laughing. "Men in our profession, as I dare say you know, have generally a few thousands of loose cash floating on purpose to give them a little excitement now and then, when they get a trifle sleepy in their quarters. I have run up and down, for my part, from about ten thousand to nothing, and back again, above a score of times since I began; and I find it has come so even in the long run, that I care very little how high I play. But I never," he added, in a low voice, "I never play with ladies, it puts me out altogether."

This decided the matter, and Major Allen Barnaby, Colonel Beauchamp, and two other gentlemen settled themselves round a table in a quiet corner, as gentlemen do settle themselves when they are going to amuse themselves in earnest.

Had Annie Beauchamp remained in the room, it is likely enough that the hours of that long evening might have offered

opportunities to Egerton too favourable to be neglected, for the making her comprehend a little better than she did at present what were his wishes, his hopes, his intentions concerning her; but, with the blindness of a perverse little mortal, she saw nothing of what was passing in his head or his heart, and she thought of nothing but the silence that had come over him on the preceding evening, when, as she confessed to herself with shame that amounted to agony, she was waiting for every word which might fall from his lips, as if her fate hung upon it. The recollection of these past feelings, together with the blank disappointment which had succeeded them, was more than she could bear any longer *en plein salon*, and begging her mother to apologise to the ladies for her absence, by telling them that she had so bad a headache as to oblige her to go to bed, she stole away, taking with her, as it seemed to Frederic Egerton, all that portion of light which could make it worth while for him to keep his eyes open, and for a few moments after he had watched her retreat, and listened to her mother's explanation of it, he meditated the commission of a similar act of self-indulgence. But he luckily recollected that his doing so would neither be particularly polite nor particularly discreet; and he therefore abandoned the project; the more readily, perhaps, because he happened to observe Don Tornorino move quietly away from the place he occupied beside his lady, and station himself at no great distance from his respected father-in-law, about whom he revolved with the same graceful air of non-chalance which had once before attracted his attention.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"MY dear," said Major Allen Barnaby, on waking, the morning after Colonel Beauchamp's dinner-party, "I am afraid I won rather too much last night."

"Won too much? What can you mean, good man?" replied his wife, rousing herself from sleep that had produced many delightful dreams. "Does your tender conscience reproach you, my Donny? If so, make over your winnings to me, and the generosity shall atone for—for whatever you reproach yourself with, my dear."

"I don't think it would answer," he returned, in a tone rather too grave for jesting. "The thirst which gets hold of one in this hateful climate forces a man to drink, whether he will or no, and I have a sort of confused recollection of having got rather excited last night, and going it, may be, a trifle too fast."

"Mercy on me! I hope you did no such thing!" she replied, looking a good deal alarmed. "Just think of the horror of having

our beautiful smooth-sailing here spoilt by such a piece of folly as that!"

"Think of it? I can't bear to think of it," said he. "Our only hope is that the others were in the same condition as myself, and will recollect nothing very clearly. But tell me," he added, "wasn't that stiff young Egerton buzzing about me all the time? He looks like one that might be as dry as Etna before he'd ever think of recruiting himself by a dram. Wasn't he hanging about the table, wife? I have a confused sort of notion of having been bothered by it."

"He did nothing the whole evening but watch the players," she replied, looking considerably alarmed. "If this is to be the Curzon-street business over again, what is to become of us?"

"Don't lose your courage, my dear," said he, with a degree of composure that he thought was well calculated to re-assure, "if things don't prosper here, we must go ahead, as the natives say."

"It may be easier to say than to do, Major Allen," she replied, not a little provoked by the indifference with which he appeared ready to sacrifice all the advantages which she had obtained with so much ability. "You may go ahead, as you call it, with such a stone thrown after you as may pretty speedily bring you to a stand still."

"Very likely, my dear; especially if you get a fancy to forget the name I ought to go by. I must beg you won't take to calling me Major Allen, Mrs. Barnaby, or mischief will be sure to come of it. But don't let you and I quarrel, wife. It is too late in the day for either of us to profit by that now. I think we had better change our quarters, I won't deny that; but I dare say that your cleverness will find out some excuse for doing it, that will set all right again. That is to say, if we once fairly get off; for I won't stay, mind that, if you please, so don't waste your wit in trying to contrive it."

"Good heaven! have you really brought matters to such a pass as that, major?" said the unfortunate lady, her eyes flashing and her cheeks becoming redder than ever rouge made them. "What a return for all my enormous exertions for you! And such unequalled success, too! It is enough to drive one mad!"

"Not enough to drive such a woman as you are, mad, my charming Barnaby," said he, with a coaxing smile. "Besides, my dear, you have never yet asked how much this rather bold winning may amount to. If we get clear off with it, that may make some considerable difference, I promise you."

"What difference," said she, "can it make to me, sir, I should like to know? You have taken care to keep your winnings pretty snugly to yourself, you will please to remember; whereas I have been labouring, as you well know, to make the great and *honourable* celebrity I have obtained as advantageous to you as myself, and this is the return I get for it."

To do my heroine justice, she was not a weeping lady; but at this moment, and especially as she pronounced the word *honourable*, which not only set off with great effect the indiscreet proceedings of her spouse, but brought fresh upon her memory the delightful feelings with which she had listened to the demands for her autograph, at this moment tears certainly started to her eyes, and she seemed determined to make the most of them, blowing her nose a good deal, and even producing at intervals something very like a sob.

Major Allen Barnaby had left his bed when this conversation began, and had been employing himself from the moment he had thrown on his dressing-gown in the necessary operation of shaving, but upon observing the condition of his wife, and at the same time feeling the force of the words she had spoken, he laid aside the instrument which he was employing upon his chin, walked across the room to the spot where he had deposited the garments he had worn the night before, and extracting his pocket-book from the receptacle in which it was lodged, walked back again to the bed, and laid it unopened on her pillow.

"There, my dear," he said, as he quietly renewed his shaving; "there! you never had that little book in your hands before, to the best of my knowledge and belief; and now I recommend you to dry your handsome eyes, and look at it. It is just the first packet you will come to that you will find the most worthy of observation."

The mind of my admirable heroine was not formed to dissolve in watery woe at such a moment as this. She instantly sat up in bed, opened the pocket-book, and obeying exactly the instructions she had received, came upon a packet of exceedingly dirty papers, among which, however, was one little scrap newly written upon, and looking like a bit of first-rate letter paper. The dirty papers were, as the lady well knew, uncleanly thumbed bank-notes, and their whole amount was seven hundred and eighty dollars, but the scrap of letter-paper was worth them all put together, and a pretty considerable bit of money besides; being an order, payable at sight, upon a bank at Washington, and signed "Themistocles Joseph John Hapford," a name already well known to the attentive ears of Mrs. Allen Barnaby as that of a senator of first-rate standing, a very wealthy planter, and lastly, as one of the brilliant company who had been invited to meet them on the preceding day. The paper thus satisfactorily inscribed might, therefore, be fairly estimated at the value indicated by the figures it bore, which amounted to the pleasant sum of one thousand five hundred and fifty dollars. For a moment the countenance of Mrs. Allen Barnaby became radiant, but in the next it faded again, and she exclaimed, with a deep sigh—

"Yes, Donny, yes! This might atone for much! but what did you find the paper you got in Curzon-street worth?"

"I don't wonder it should come into your head, my dear,"

replied her husband: "but I am happy to say that we have a considerably better chance this time. I am sure, my dear, that I shall be as sorry as you can be to take you away from all the honour and renown that you are so cleverly making for yourself here, and indeed I shan't think of doing it, whatever I may be obliged to do myself, if upon reflection you prefer remaining behind. But the state of the case is this—I remember it all perfectly now that I have dipped my head in cold water, and set about recollecting a little—the state of the case is this, my Barnaby: the bank-notes that you find there, were lost between Colonel Beauchamp and his other playing friend, Judge Wilkins, who lives close by; but the draft came, as you see, from Mr. Hapford, who drove above fifteen miles to his own house after the table broke up; that I well remember, for there was a deal of talking about wanting him to stay. Well now, it strikes me, that the only safe thing for me to do, is to declare this morning that either you, or I, or Tornorino (Patty must know nothing about it)—but some one of us three must be taken ill with a terrible complaint that we have perhaps been long used to, and set off, without losing a moment, bag and baggage, to look for the best medical assistance. We may promise to come back again, you know, and so we can, if we like it; that is to say, if nothing comes of what passed last night, besides the quiet cashing of this neat check. Half of that whole sum of two thousand three hundred and thirty dollars I mean to present to you, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, for your own particular use and benefit, to make up to you for any inconvenience which this accident may have occasioned."

These last words were pronounced with a low bow, performed at the bottom of the bed, where the major stood wiping his razor upon the sleeve of his dressing-gown, while his eyes were fixed with a slight expression of anxiety upon the august countenance of his wife. He had, however, no longer anything to fear in that quarter; the noble generosity of purpose which he thus announced, not only stifled every sentiment of anger, but created an emotion of admiration which in her generous heart left room for no other.

"You may at times be thoughtless and indiscreet, my dear major," she replied, in a tone of deep feeling, "but there is a fund of just and honourable delicacy about you, sufficient to redeem a thousand such trifling errors. I accept your present as frankly as it is offered, and will not deny that it is as just as it is generous; for the blunder you have made has certainly stopped me short in a very glorious career. Not that I mean to abandon my project, observe. It is much too well imagined, and has in fact already been far too successful to be given up. However, we need not talk about that now; I shall be able to manage the bringing it forward again, I dare say. What we must think of now, my dear Donny, is how to get off with flying colours here: and that too, I dare say I shall be able to manage; your generous conduct will inspire me

with spirit to get through it all. But it is I who must be sick, major. I should not like, my dear, to see you undertake such a troublesome job. All you need do, is to be in a dreadful agony of terror about me, and insist upon having me removed to some of the great cities directly—you understand?"

"Oh yes! my dear, I understand most perfectly well, you may depend upon it, and the only improvement I suggest is, that whatever city we decide upon going to before we set out, we should hear something as we go along that should make us change our minds and send us to another."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby looked grave.

"Indeed! Was the circumstance that occurred last night so—so very much out of the common way?" said she.

Her husband laughed.

"Why, no, my dear," he replied, "I can't say that it was anything very extraordinary; but it is always impossible to say, you know, how a joke of that kind may be taken by strangers. Some people think a good deal of it, while others again treat it quite lightly. But we ought to be prepared for the worst. If I can but get that bit of paper honoured, however, I shall care very little what any of the folks in this nasty, frizzling, frying, burnt-up, negro-driving country, may think or feel on the subject. We have nothing to do but keep moving, my dear, and I have a notion that you and I, between us, may snap our fingers at the whole world."

"All I can say in return, major, is, that we must do our best," replied the lady, with an encouraging smile. "And now, my dear," she continued, "set off directly, catch hold of one of the blackmoors, and send in word to madam that you must beg to speak to her without delay. She won't keep you waiting, you may depend upon it, and, when you see her, just look and speak as a devoted husband ought to do when he thinks himself in danger of losing the best of wives, and then send her to me, and you shall find everything beautifully arranged for our setting off in the twinkling of an eye."

"How many more times shall I have to tell you that you were born for me?" cried the major, suddenly saluting her with all the fervour of young affection; "though I can never hope to equal you in anything," he added, "you shall see at least that your example is not altogether lost. If I do not enact the agonised husband with spirit, then never trust me again. But upon my soul, my Barnaby, I shall only have to fancy that the thing is real in order to be in cue for acting despair to perfection."

This tender assurance was received with a very charming smile, and then the fond husband tore himself away, to perform the part assigned him. This part, as it speedily appeared, was instantly acted by the alert major, and with undoubted success; for almost before Mrs. Allen Barnaby had time to arrange everything about her in proper order for her own part of the drama, her door was

opened with a hurried and agitated hand, and Mrs. Beauchamp stood before her.

Short as the interval had been, however, Mrs. Allen Barnaby had found time to wash all traces of rouge from her cheeks, and the effect of this to one who had never seen her but in the fullest bloom, was really startling.

"Oh my!" exclaimed the terrified lady of the mansion, to whom the idea of yellow fever had immediately suggested itself,—“oh my! you are sick, sure enough! My dear, dear lady, I'll send off to Euripedesville this very moment, for it is there that bides the smartest doctor we have. Only think of your being caughted so, all of a minute! I'll come again in no time,” she added, turning towards the door; “but first, before everything, we must send for the doctor.” A low groan indicative of the very severest suffering, arrested her steps. “Oh dear! oh dear! I do believe she's dying already,” exclaimed the terrified Mrs. Beauchamp, wringing her hands, and then flying to the bell, she rang it violently.

“Come to me!” murmured the sufferer, “oh come to me, my dearest friend, and let me speak one word to you.”

Delighted to find that so much strength was left, Mrs. Beauchamp hastened to obey her, but before she could reach the side of the bed where she lay, half-a-dozen woolly heads appeared at the door to answer the bell.

“Shall I tell the creturs to get you a hot bath, my dear?” said the kind hostess, hanging over her.

“No, no, no,” groaned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, “only send them away, and let me speak to you for one single moment alone.”

The wish was instantly obeyed, the slaves dismissed, the door closed, and Mrs. Beauchamp hanging over the bed to catch the slightest sound.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby now appeared to make a strong effort to enable herself to speak intelligibly, and then said, lowly and slowly, but with perfect distinctness—

“My friend, I am poisoned!”

Mrs. Beauchamp's only reply was a piercing shriek.

“Compose yourself, my dearest friend, compose yourself, I entreat you,” resumed the invalid, “let me be but prompt in what I have to say, and what I have to do, and I may yet be saved!”

“Speak, then, speak, my dearest lady,” returned poor Mrs. Beauchamp, with tears running down her cheeks, “and I will obey you to the very smallest particular.”

On receiving this assurance, Mrs. Allen Barnaby raised herself by a great effort in her bed, in order to make what she was about to say more distinctly audible, and then, though occasionally interrupted by pangs which caused her to groan terribly, she said—

“Yes, my friend, it is but too certain that I am poisoned. Among the many studies to which I have given attention, the effect of poisons is one, and this enables me—oh-h-h!—to tell you with

the most perfect certainty that I am now suffering from the effect of some mineral poison administered about twelve or fourteen hours ago. That some revengeful slave, or slaves, have done this, I have not, in fact there cannot be, the slightest doubt. I am the victim of my principles. Nor shall I regret it, even if death overtakes me, provided I am assured you, my dear Mrs. Beauchamp, and those you most value and esteem—oh-h-h!—shall do me justice.”

It is impossible to describe the agony of feeling into which these words threw poor Mrs. Beauchamp; but Mrs. Allen Barnaby suddenly checked all expression of it by saying, with all the energy of lingering hope—

“Then save me! Save me by instantly lending me a carriage and horses to convey me to a steamboat that shall take me with the least possible loss of time to New York. Fortunately I have an antidote, which indeed I have already taken, that will for many days so far check the action of the poison as to give me hope of life if I can reach that city; for somewhere amongst my effects, I have the address of a practitioner there who is greatly celebrated, even in London, for his skill in cases of poison. Will you do this for me, Mrs. Beauchamp, and without an hour’s delay?”

“Will I?” exclaimed the good lady, running towards the door, “oh! what is there I would not do?” And she was out of sight in a moment.

The affectionate major, whose anxiety naturally kept him hovering at the threshold, entered the room as Mrs. Beauchamp quitted it, and carefully closing the door approached the bed, and directed an inquiring glance towards his wife.

“I am very bad indeed, my dear,” she said, as her black eye twinkled laughingly up to his. “I am poisoned, major, please to observe that. I am poisoned by the wicked slaves who have found out my principles; so of course everything ought to be done that can be done to get me out of their way, and within reach of a certain learned man at New York, who I happen to know cures poisoned folks to a miracle.”

“But, my dear,” returned the major, looking very grave, “do you remember how many day’s journey it is between this place and New York? How is it possible that you should survive till you get there?”

“How sweetly anxious you are for me!” returned his lady, tenderly. “But don’t be alarmed, major. By the greatest good luck in the world I happen to have heard of an antidote which *delays* the action of poison in a most remarkable manner, and this antidote I have already taken, my love; so don’t agitate yourself; but just tell me if you don’t think this would be an excellent opportunity for us to get rid of those tiresome Perkinses? Patty and I are both of us as sick of them as possible. The truth is, you see, that everything is perfectly different from what we expected.

I had no idea of our getting on as we have done, and as I have no doubt in the world that we shall do again, if we can contrive to get off before that senator man comes to look after you. But these lanky Perkinses are ten times more plague than profit, and I'd give anything to be fairly quit of them."

"That's very likely, I think; but I protest I don't very well see how you are to set about it," returned the major, drily.

"Leave that to me, my dear, I'll just have a try for it, at any rate. And now I think you had better get sight of Patty, and tell her that I am very ill. You may tell her the poison story, if you like it, only don't frighten her, poor thing. As to her Don——"

"Oh, as to her Don," interrupted the major, laughing, "you may depend upon it he will be exceedingly intelligent upon the subject."

"Pray don't laugh so very loud. Just fancy any one hearing you!" whispered his wife.

Major Allen Barnaby promised to be more discreet; and after a little further conversation concerning the necessary packing, and the best means of setting the Perkinses to do it, if they could be left behind without offending them, he departed.

It is unnecessary to follow every stage of the process by which the whole business was finally arranged; it will be sufficient to state that before noon, on the day following the great Big-Gang Bank dinner-party, Mrs. Major Allen Barnaby was laid, amidst an inconceivable number of pillows and cushions at the bottom of a Deerborn, with her adoring husband sitting beside her, to watch every movement, and administer every attention, as it drove gently along towards the place at which they hoped to meet a steamboat; while Patty and her Don followed in another carriage, having "another still" behind them, conveying their baggage. A very few words had settled the Perkins question most satisfactorily to all parties.

Mrs. Beauchamp rejoiced with no common joy at the idea of still retaining near her a fraction of the enlightened English party whose introduction to her friends had been attended with so much *éclat*; and the Miss Perkinses were by no means sorry for the transfer, being, to say the truth, rather tired of the patronage under which they had left their native land. Not to mention that the worthy Louisa began to suspect, from the various conversations which she had held with her friend Annie, that, even in a pecuniary point of view, they might manage a good deal better without them. Fortunately, this gentle-hearted lady, though rather more than sufficiently yielding in some particulars, never suffered anybody to interfere with her money matters. She had very snugly made all her own little arrangements of this kind before setting out, without any other assistance than that of the banker, whom she found was the proper person to employ upon the occasion, and she knew to a fraction how much, to a day when, and to a street and a number

where, she might reckon upon her resources. The parting, however, though not regretted, was exceedingly affectionate, and many were the assurances exchanged that they should meet again, somewhere or other, very soon.

It would be difficult to say why it was that neither of the Miss Perkins believed one single word about Mrs. Allen Barnaby's sudden indisposition; but such was the fact, though they hinted not this scepticism to any human being, save each other. Perhaps Miss Louisa might retain in her memory a sufficient number of by-gone make-believes, to generate doubts upon the present occasion; and perhaps the sympathising Miss Matilda might discover something life-like, and even healthy, in the anxiety expressed by her dear friend, whenever Mrs. Beauchamp left her side, concerning the safety of such of her suits as had been unpacked since their arrival at "the Bank." Whatever the cause, the fact was as I have said; neither of the sisters gave faith to her statement concerning her dreadful sufferings; and I mention this in justice to the spinsters, who, notwithstanding their various little peculiarities, were not so hard-hearted as to have seen any lady of their acquaintance poisoned, and packed up, in so very alarming a state, without feeling much greater concern for her condition than they now did for that of Mrs. Allen Barnaby. They were both of them too wise, however, as I have before stated, to hint their suspicions to the amiable lady who cherished them both so kindly (and so very conveniently) for no reason in the world but because they were Mrs. Allen Barnaby's *attachées*.

CHAPTER XXIX.

BEFORE I follow my heroine in her further progress, I must say a few words concerning some of the personages she had left behind her. For the Miss Perkins the reader need have no anxieties for several months to come. The noble emotions of admiration and gratitude to which Mrs. Allen Barnaby's efforts in favour of the slave system had given rise, were not of a nature to fade away hastily; for all the strongest passions of the planter race were roused in the cause, and it was impossible to mention her name without producing among them an universal murmur of affectionate applause. So deep, and so sincere was this feeling, that many of the families who had been looking forward to a visit from the enlightened traveller, were but too happy to soothe their disappointment at not seeing her, by obtaining a visit from her dear friends and travelling companions of sufficient duration to permit their being shown and exhibited in all directions; in proof that their hosts, for the time being, were really and truly among the

happy few who were personally acquainted with the illustrious lady.

During the whole of this vicarial ovation, the two sisters were, in their different ways, exceedingly happy. Miss Louisa, it is true, never saw any other American young lady that she admired quite as much as Annie; but her spirits were sustained in a most delightful state, made up of brilliant hopes and comfortable certainties. She was feasted, waited upon, and in all respects treated with the highest consideration, while her little purse scarcely became lighter by a single cent.

This was a sober certainty: while her hopes were sustained by watching day by day the prodigious politeness of the American bachelors to her sister, which she would not suffer herself to doubt, must, in time, come to something. And as for Miss Matilda herself, she lived in a state of continual ecstasy. She was handed about by the elbow wherever she moved; nobody ever seemed to forget that she was in the room; the ladies taught her how to arrange a "spit-curl," so as to defy the moistifying effects of the climate and the season; and in every drawing-room she entered, the very first and best of the gentlemen, single as well as married, seemed to take a pride in showing how greatly they admired her.

We will leave our old acquaintances in this happy condition, and turn to take a glance at poor Annie Beauchamp. All the joy that the departure of Mrs. Allen Barnaby and Co. might have given her, under other circumstances, was merged and forgotten in the deeper interest of a scene which occurred immediately afterwards.

Frederic Egerton had, as I before mentioned, again been induced to watch the peculiar manner in which the dark-eyed, silent son-in-law of Major Allen Barnaby seemed to float round and round the card-table at which his father-in-law was engaged. Had he never observed it before, the circumstance might not so completely have awakened his attention now; but his observation being stimulated by the suspicion he had previously conceived, he very soon became convinced that the father and son were in league together, and that the former did not play fairly.

Having, at length, fully made up his mind on this point, he retired to bed. Had there been no such being as Annie Beauchamp in existence, it may be doubted whether the young Englishman would have thought himself called upon to interfere in so very delicate a business, especially as he had no power of bringing forward any positive proof on the subject; but the idea of suffering the father of one who was becoming every hour more closely interwoven with all his future hopes to suffer wrong, to permit, in short, the father of Annie to be cheated and betrayed by a travelling swindler, and that swindler an Englishman, was intolerable; and, after long cogitation with himself, he at length dropped asleep, with the determination of mentioning the circumstance to Annie

himself, and leaving the future management of the affair to her discretion.

It was very late when Egerton went to sleep, and it was not very early when he woke; but, upon summoning a slave and inquiring whether the family had breakfasted, he was told that the house was in great confusion on account of the English biggest lady being taken ill, and like to die. He then ventured to inquire for Miss Beauchamp, and was informed that she had not yet left her room.

Vexed and harassed with the uncertainty of what he ought to do in this new state of things, he entered the usual breakfast-room, and, finding it entirely unoccupied, though there were symptoms of several persons having breakfasted there, he sat down alone, broke his fast upon what he found, and then rambled out upon the lawn, determined to occupy the interval till the next hour of family meeting as he could, and then to be guided as to what he ought to do by the position of the parties who should then assemble. If he should find that the illustrious authoress was really at the point of death, he generously made up his mind to let her die in peace; but in case it proved, as he strongly suspected, that the slave he had questioned had talked about that of which he knew nothing, he was equally determined, by some means or other, to put the family upon their guard.

In pursuance of this intention he strolled away into the rice grounds, his curiosity to see the cultivation of a crop so new to him, making him for an hour or so forget the fatigue which the intense heat produced. He questioned several of the slaves, but found them uniformly unwilling to converse; a sort of sullen reserve which equally surprised and disgusted him, till he was enabled to judge the cause of it more fairly by the finesse of a negro youth, who, while he was attempting to elicit some local information from the man next him, said in a low but very distinct voice, and without for an instant intermitting his labour or changing his attitude—

“Massa besser no talk nigger slave. White looker watch.”

Thus put on his guard, he took care to give no immediate indication than he had been thus warned, and moved on with an air of idle indifference; but ere he had taken many steps, he was enabled to comprehend the necessity of the warning by perceiving that there was indeed a white looker on the watch; for a fellow of that complexion, but with a scowl as black as night, was following his movements from behind the shelter of a palmetto bush.

Rendered cautious for the sake of the poor negroes by this discovery, Mr. Egerton determined to pursue his study of statistics in this direction no further, and immediately returned to the house. In the usual *keeping*-room he found the eldest Miss Perkins seated alone in expectation of the arrival of her friend Annie, who had promised to lead her to some retreat in the grounds that had the reputation of being first-rate cool.

Egerton immediately desired her to inform him if it were true that Mrs. Allen Barnaby was dangerously ill. Miss Louisa simpered a little, and replied—

“Oh dear, sir, I hope not.”

“I wonder, then, what the black meant who told me that all the house was in confusion, and the biggest of the lady visitors at the point of death.”

Miss Louisa laughed outright, for she never felt at all afraid of Mr. Egerton, and she was greatly amused at the phrase used to describe her illustrious friend.

“You must not accuse the poor black of meaning to tell stories either, Mr. Egerton,” said she; “and, indeed, what he said was strictly true, as far as the confusion of the house goes, for most certainly the confusion *was* very great; however, it is all over now, and Major and Mrs. Allen Barnaby, their daughter, and son-in-law, are all set off for New York.”

“All set off for New York?” repeated Egerton, in an accent that seemed rather to puzzle Miss Louisa.

“I suppose you are very much surprised, are you not, sir, at hearing they are all gone, and we left here? I am sure it seems to me quite like a dream.”

“I am not very greatly surprised that Major Allen Barnaby should have taken himself off,” replied the young man; “but I am very glad,” he added, with a friendly smile, “that you are left behind.”

“That is very kind of you,” said the grateful spinster; looking up in his face, however, as if she wished him to say a little more on the subject. “But I wonder you are not a little more surprised, sir.”

“My good lady,” he replied, “will you tell me if you and your sister have any intention of joining them again?”

“Oh dear, yes, I suppose so,” she answered; but added, after a moment’s reflection, “not that anything was exactly settled as to the time; but they all seemed to talk as if they should see us again soon.”

“I hope, Miss Perkins,” said Egerton, earnestly, “that you will never see them again. I have every reason to believe that the major, as he calls himself is little better than a common swindler and cheat; and I am quite persuaded that you and your sister must have been greatly deceived, or you would not have travelled in his company.”

These words came like a thunderbolt upon poor Miss Perkins, and her distress and astonishment were so great, that her good-natured countryman entered more fully into the subject with her than he had intended, and had the satisfaction of perceiving that his good counsel was not thrown away, but that she was very stoutly determined never to renew the intercourse thus fortunately broken off between them. Her gratitude to him was equally great and

sincere, and the simple but earnest expression of it so plainly bore the impress of truth, that the somewhat incongruous seeming friendship between them became closer than ever, and he ventured to speak to her of Annie, not exactly as a confidant, indeed, but with more freedom than he would have used with any other individual in the family.

He told her that as the English party invited by Colonel Beachamp must now be considered as broken up, he should himself take leave almost immediately, but that he should be sorry to do so without finding an opportunity of saying farewell to her young friend and favourite, Miss Beauchamp.

"I hope," he added, "that the indisposition she complained of yesterday is not serious, but it effectually prevented my speaking to her all day; nor have I been fortunate enough to see her at all this morning."

Miss Perkins shook her head mournfully in reply, but did not answer him in words.

"You do not think her seriously ill, Miss Perkins?" said the young man, changing colour.

"No, sir, no; I don't, indeed," said the kind soul, endeavouring, *sans façon*, to soothe the anxiety she saw he was feeling. "It is not her health, sir, that makes me uneasy about her, but I don't think she is happy."

"What do you suppose makes her otherwise, Miss Perkins?" said he, with a degree of emotion which he had no power to conceal.

"Why, it puzzles me, sir. I never did see any girl exactly like this American young lady, and that's the reason, perhaps, that I don't quite understand why she is unhappy. She is so sweetly kind, that when we are talking together she always seems gay and cheerful; but I think that is only to give me pleasure, for I never come upon her unawares—that is of late, I mean—that I don't see the tears in her eyes."

"Is it not possible," said Egerton, "that she may have seen reason to disapprove the great intimacy her mother has been forming in so absurd a manner with those Barnaby people?"

"I don't believe she likes it," replied Miss Louisa, musingly, and as if recalling things that had passed.

"Then she shall never be exposed to it again," he eagerly replied. "But, perhaps, there is no chance of their ever meeting again?"

On this point, however, Miss Perkins immediately set him right, repeating many of the affectionate phrases on both sides which predicted future intercourse and continued intimacy. On hearing this, Egerton immediately decided upon communicating his observations to his hospitable entertainers; a communication which he would certainly rather have avoided, but which, from what he now heard, appeared to be a positive duty.

A few minutes after this resolution was taken, a favourable opportunity arrived for putting it in practice, the colonel and his lady, their daughter and Miss Matilda, all entering the room together.

"Oh, here you are," said Mrs. Beauchamp, "we have been looking for you that we might go all together to the spring-house. I have had it all got ready for you, with flowers, and the nigger-girls churning, and everything. I am so sorry that my dear, darling Mrs. Allen Barnaby, didn't see it before she went. But I pray to God we shall soon have her back again."

Upon this hint he spoke, and quietly and concisely gave his hearers to understand that accident had discovered to him some particulars in the conduct of the person calling himself Major Allen Barnaby, which made it his duty to caution them against any further intercourse with him or his family. It is impossible to describe the vehemence of rage and anger with which this statement was listened to by Mrs. Beauchamp.

"You are a false slanderer, sir!" she exclaimed, as soon as she found breath to speak; "and happily for the peace and happiness, and perhaps the lives of me and mine, I am capable of proving my words against you, in a different sort of manner, I expect, from what you can pretend to offer in defence of your most wicked falsehoods. It isn't ten minutes ago, colonel," she continued, with vehement gesticulation, and a degree of anger that seemed to make it difficult for her to articulate, "no, not ten minutes ago, that I met Tomkins in the passage leading to your room. I asked him what he wanted, and he said he only wished to tell you that one of your company, describing him"—and here the angry lady pointed at Mr. Egerton—"he only wanted to tell you that this young traitor had been seen this very morning talking and cajoling with the slaves, and that he thought it had better be looked to. And how did I answer him? I told him he was a fool, and didn't know what he was talking about, so perfect was my confidence in his honour. But now see if the words of Tomkins are not proved to the very letter? Who is there can doubt, I should like to know, this wicked young man's motive for trying to make mischief between me and my dearest friends? He is an abolitionist. Let him deny it if he can. He is come here, I'll bet my life, to raise a rebellion amongst the slaves; and not content with that, just see the vengeance with which he falls upon the excellent people who have now left us, for the alone reason that they would be likely to stop his wicked plottings if they could. And now, who is there will take upon them to say that it wasn't himself, and no other, that contrived to get the dose that threatens the life of our invaluable friend? It is not my business, but yours, Colonel Beauchamp; but as I live and breathe, I would have him taken up and sent to prison on suspicion."

Here the indignant lady stopped, and it would be difficult to say which of her audience felt the most astonished at her attack.

It required a minute or two for the colonel to recover himself sufficiently to speak; but when he did, it was in terms scarcely less vehement than those used by his wife.

The fact of Egerton's having been seen in conversation with his slaves, was in the eyes of both almost the deepest crime he could commit, as it would have been, probably, in those of nearly every other proprietor in the state; for the jealousy on this subject amounts to a passion as vehement as that of Othello himself. Nevertheless, the prudent colonel did not appear to approve the scheme of sending the offender to prison, although he entertained no doubt whatever that his lady's conjecture was perfectly correct as to the cause of the imputation thrown on the character of Major Allen Barnaby. He had been himself exceedingly tipsy the night before, and all he recollected or knew as to the result of the long hours of high play in which he and his friends had indulged, was that he had discovered himself in the morning to have been the winner of twenty dollars. To him, therefore, it appeared quite evident that nothing but malice could have dictated the statement they had heard, and accordingly he scrupled not to say as much, adding that the object of the slander being as evident as the slander itself, the sooner the utterer of it was out of his house and off his premises the better.

For half a moment Egerton stood silent, as if uncertain what he should reply, and in that half moment he caught sight of Annie, who was standing at the other end of the room, her cheeks and lips as colourless as marble, and with both her hands resting upon the back of a chair, as if to prevent herself from falling. A wild thought of flying towards her, of proclaiming his love, and rebutting the charge brought against him, rushed through his brain; but soberer thoughts succeeded, and a more dignified line of conduct suggested itself.

"Colonel Beauchamp," he said, "there is no chance at this moment that my telling you I am wholly innocent of the charge brought against me, should be listened to either by yourself or your lady; and therefore I shall abstain from all protestation on the subject. I beg to thank you for your obliging hospitality, and to assure you that I shall remember that, when your very idle suspicions against me shall be forgotten. As I have no servant with me, I must beg permission to enter the room I have occupied for a few moments, that I may throw my things together preparatory to their removal. Farewell."

Having spoken these words, the young man took his leave of Miss Matilda Perkins by a very civil bow, and then passing on to her sister, who was standing at no great distance from Annie, he took her hand, and said in a tone that could be distinctly heard by none but herself—

"Miss Perkins, I feel convinced that I have not lost your esteem, and therefore I venture to ask a favour of you on which the happi-

ness of my life depends. Will you contrive this evening to bring your young friend, Miss Beauchamp, to the house we all visited together on Tuesday last, and at the same hour?"

These words were uttered very rapidly, and he looked to the good lady's eyes, rather than her lips, for the reply. It was given with equal caution and kindness, and with one more glance at the trembling Annie, he left the room. The result of this rendezvous must be told hereafter; for it is now absolutely necessary that we should look after the fortunes of my heroine.

CHAPTER XXX.

ON reaching the little village of Shakspeare Town, at which it was the purpose of Major Allen Barnaby to embark, he had the considerable satisfaction of hearing that no steamer for New York was expected to stop there for a day or two; he therefore dismissed the conveyances so zealously lent for the use of his beloved and suffering wife and her family; wrote a few affectionate lines to Mrs. Beauchamp, stating, that though violent spasms had returned on the road, the precious object of his care was again so far relieved as to encourage the delightful hope that the final result would be favourable; and then shut himself up with his suffering angel at the hotel, reiterating very audible orders on all sides, that notice should be given them at whatever hour of the day or night a steamer bound for New York direct, should reach the station.

During the extremely comfortable little *tête-à-tête* supper which followed (for the negro attendants and their horses were to repose for that night at Shakspeare Town, which rendered it necessary that the every-way interesting invalid should confine herself to her chamber), a discussion arose between the major and his wife as to the necessity of keeping Patty in the dark respecting the real state of the case. The major was of opinion that it would be better for her morality that she should continue to live in ignorance of his peculiar mode of playing cards, as well as the extraordinary facility with which her mother could seem the thing she was not; but Mrs. Allen Barnaby did not altogether agree with him.

"As to her knowing no more than you choose to tell her, Donny, about your rules of play, I have no objection; though, after all, you know, her ignorance or innocence, as you call it, must depend altogether on her husband. He's up to everything, and if he should choose to live on the same pleasant confidential terms with his wife as you do with me, Donny, I don't see how we can interfere to prevent it. But Patty's no fool, and not a bit more likely to make a fuss about nothing than her mother was before

her. But with all this we have nothing to do; and for you, my dear, you may just tell or not tell, as much as you like. But for my own part of the business, I have made up my mind, as I always have done throughout my whole life, to act in strict conformity to my principles, and nobody in my opinion can be in any degree worthy of esteem who does otherwise. I have always endeavoured, my dear major, to impress on the mind of our daughter, that it is a woman's duty to sacrifice everything for the interest of her husband; and as far as I am concerned, I shall merely tell Patty that you had had enough of Big-Gang Bank, and requested me to facilitate your departure in any manner I could devise—and of course, I shall add, that in conformity to the unvarying line of conduct which I marked out for myself from the first hour of my becoming a wife, I instantly feigned illness, as being at once the most prompt and the most effectual mode of complying with your wishes."

"Well, my dear, that is all very right and proper," replied the major; "and no man, I am sure, could find in his heart to say a word against it. But suppose she should take it into *her* head, wife, to ask what it was that put it into *my* head to be in such a monstrous hurry to get off, what should you tell her? I do love the girl, and I don't want her to think me worse than I am; and upon my honour and life, my dear, what happened the other night, the accident I mean upon which the luck turned, was just exactly nothing. So I think, if you please, that if she should take a fancy for questioning you, the best thing to do will be just to refer her to me; saying, you know, in your own charming manner, which I am sure gives the finest example that ever girl had, that it was enough for you to know that I wanted to be off, and that you didn't care three farthings, or something like that, you understand, whether you went or whether you stayed, provided I was pleased. And then, if she wants to know more, of course she will come to me—and I don't much fear but what I shall find something or other to tell her that will set her mind at rest."

This point being satisfactorily adjusted, the truly conjugal couple retired to rest; and when the major sallied forth the next morning, he had the satisfaction of finding his black *cortège* all ready to depart, and only waiting to receive the very latest account respecting the health of the "missis."

This was given in such a manner, as while it sustained hope, left no room for surprise at the too prompt recovery of the assassinated authoress—and then the carriages and their guard of honour retreated, leaving the major and his charming helpmate at liberty to rejoice at their ease at the perfect success of a stratagem which had enabled them to escape from an embarrassment that might have proved not a little perplexing.

"Now for it," exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as she watched from her bedroom window the last of the three vehicles disappear—

ing behind the trees, "now, my dear, let us look after Patty, and settle all together what we had better do next."

"We will settle, my dear," replied her polite husband, "as soon as you please; but as to our doing it *all together*, I see no need of that. Neither the Don nor his lady, as I take it, will make any objection to follow, let us move which way we will."

"I am decidedly for Philadelphia," said the lady.

"And I, with grief I confess it, am decidedly against it," responded the gentleman; "but I will give you an excellent reason for it. There is no high play at Philadelphia."

"And that is precisely the excellent reason for which you ought to go there," rejoined Mrs. Allen Barnaby. "Why was it, if you please, that we made such a forced march from our snug quarters at the Beauchamps? And why did I consent to lie for the best part of two days like a sick dog in a basket? Wasn't it wholly and solely for the purpose of your removing yourself, my good Mr. Major, from the place where a certain Mr. Themistocles Joseph John Hapford (you see I have not forgotten the precious name to which I am to owe my darling dollars) was likely to find you? And where, I should like to know, would he be so little apt to look for you as in a city where there is no high play going on?"

"I hope I shall never be such a fool, wife, as to fix downright upon anything without first taking your judgment upon it," said the major, with energy. "You most decidedly are what our admirable friends have called first-rate. Philadelphia, then, let it be. I'll go and mystify Patty a little; but I think I shall only say I was tired, and got you for fun to play sick, because I wanted to be off. There is no need to frighten her, you know, and make her fancy that every bush she sees is a constable running after me."

"But stop one minute," returned his wife. "Just tell me before you go, whether you mean to take what the ladies here call 'a spell of boarding,' or whether you shall prefer going into private lodgings?"

"As you will, my dear," replied the major, who certainly became more and more convinced every day of his life that his wife was one of the cleverest women in the world. "I really had much rather that you should settle that point yourself."

"Then we will board, major," she replied, with her usual decision of purpose. "As we are absolutely without letters or introductions of any kind, it is necessary now, as it was at first, that we should get where setting ourselves off a little will turn to account."

The major kissed his hand to her and walked off, saying, as he went—

"*Bravissimo!* You are the best trump, my dear, that ever fell to my share. And now I'll go and do what is needful with our Patty, and then give orders that notice shall be given us when the first steamer for Philadelphia arrives."

Nothing could be more prosperous than the little voyage which, partly by river, and partly by sea, brought my heroine and her amiable family to Philadelphia. They had made themselves sufficiently agreeable on board the steamboat to have obtained a good deal of useful local information in return for the answers they had thought proper to give in the national cross-examination to which, as a matter of course, they had been subjected during the voyage. The name, and all other particulars relative to the most fashionable boarding-house in the city, made part of this, and they immediately made use of it, by ordering their baggage to be conveyed at once to No. —, Chesnut-street, following themselves on foot.

On inquiring for the Mrs. Simcoe, whom they had been instructed to ask for, as the head of the establishment, they were ushered through an exquisitely neat hall to a large handsome parlour at the back of the house. At the moment they entered, it was unoccupied, save by the glossy furniture which shone with all the brightness that horse-hair and mahogany can show, when not a single particle of dust is permitted to tarnish its brilliance.

"It's a clean place, at any rate," observed the major.

"But the sofa is not half so soft and comfortable as those at New Orleans, or at the Beauchamps' either," exclaimed Patty, very nearly getting a fall, by sliding off the firmly-stuffed, and treacherously-sloping imitation of a couch, upon which she had thrown herself at full length with her usual vivacity.

"I can't say I overmuch like the style of it," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby; "the things all look as if they were set out more for show than use."

The Don said nothing, but he took the liberty of looking about him, and his pale yellow nose assumed an attitude between his black mustaches which expressed sufficiently well a feeling of distaste and discomfort.

But ere another word could be uttered by any of them, the door was opened, and a lady appeared at it, whose aspect must have had something in it calculated to inspire respect, for Patty actually put her legs off the sofa and sat upright. The person who inspired this unusual sensation in the breast of the lively bride, was a quaker lady, of about forty years of age, with a countenance as beautiful as very small features of exquisite regularity, and a complexion as delicate in its pink and white as the blossom of the eglantine could make it. Her dress was perfect in its kind, being composed of fawn-coloured silk and snowy lawn of the best quality, and arranged with such exceeding neatness, that one might have fancied a quaker fairy had been her tire-woman, so guiltless of the contamination of human fingers did she look. She bent her pretty little head four times successively, while her light blue eyes, which shone with a sort of gentle moonlight gleam from beneath the smooth bands of her flaxen hair, were directed in turn to each of the party.

"We have been recommended to this house for boarding," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, in a tone a little less peremptory than was usual with her.

"May I ask who it was that sent thee?" demanded the gentle quaker.

"Upon my word, ma'am, I don't know the name of the gentleman," replied my heroine, a little offended, perhaps, at the doubt, or the caution, which the question seemed to indicate. "But perhaps you may know the name of Colonel Beauchamp? We have been staying with him and his lady for a long visit, and if you know anything about them, that must be quite recommendation enough, I suppose."

"No doubt of it, friend, if I chanced to know them, but I do not; and thee canst understand that this makes all the difference," replied Mrs. Simcoe, in a voice, the bland tones of which seemed greatly less suited to express doubt than welcome.

"Well, ma'am, there are people enough to take dollars when they're offered, without our wasting our time to find out whether you know our friends or not. I think we had better go somewhere else, major," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, looking exceedingly indignant.

"What must we do with the baggage, Mrs. Simcoe?" said a white *help*, opening the door, and presenting a face and figure as unlike those of her mistress as possible. "What rooms are the porters to carry it into?"

This appeal caused Mrs. Simcoe to look forth into the hall, and it may be that the sight of the abundant packages assembled there, suggested the idea that the lady's boast of being well furnished with dollars had something better to support it than any acquaintance, however intimate, with all the colonels in the Union; and having gently said to her handmaiden, "Thee bide a bit," she returned into the parlour, and addressing, like all other Americans when doing business, the principal gentleman of the party, instead of the principal lady, she said—

"Thee art welcome to remain here for a spell, if such be thy wish, friend. My terms are eight dollars a week for each person, provided they occupy the best rooms; six if they take the second best; and five if they content themselves with the third."

The bargain was soon made, and the party established under the very respectable roof of Mrs. Simcoe, at the rate of six dollars a week for each of them.

Having seen the various trunks and boxes disposed of in her own room, and in that of her daughter, Mrs. Allen Barnaby seated herself in a commodious arm-chair, and began to meditate upon their new position, and the mode in which her genius might be now best employed for the benefit of herself and family. The major had walked out into the town, to find which were the most frequented coffee-houses, and to pick up whatever intelligence he might be able to meet floating about; the Don was gone with him, and Patty had proclaimed her intention of lying down on the bed till dinner-time; so that the speculations of my heroine were not

She soon found, however, that she wanted a *carte du pays*, and that there could be little profit in devising schemes, while the circumstances and peculiarities of those to be acted upon remained unknown to her. Mrs. Allen Barnaby was probably not the first person who, when wishing for a precise knowledge of men and things, has had recourse to servants for assistance. Having puzzled herself for a minute or two as to the best means of finding out what sort of people they were got amongst, she suddenly started up and rang the bell. It was not answered by the white "help" whom she had already seen, but by an exceedingly well-dressed negress, having the steady aspect of an old and respectable servant.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, "I thought there were no blacks here."

"As servants, ma'am, there are more blacks than whites," replied the woman.

"Do step in for a moment and shut the door," said the lady, in an accent of familiar kindness. "Tell me what is your name, will you?"

"My name is Ariadne, ma'am," said the negress, demurely.

"Bless me! what a fine name! But I wish, Ariadne, you would just tell me something about the company you have got in the house, and about yourselves too. I am quite glad to find blacks again here, for then I suppose there will be no occasion to change—I mean to say that the people think much the same here as elsewhere about it. How many slaves has Mrs. Simcoe got?"

"Slaves, ma'am?" said Ariadne, while a considerable portion of anger flashed from her eyes. "The Philadelphia folks know better than that, thank God! We have got no slaves here."

"Dear me, how very odd, I thought all black people were slaves?" said the puzzled traveller.

"You will know better than that, ma'am, when you have been a little longer in a free state," replied the woman, frowning. "I am as free as Mrs. Simcoe herself, ma'am, and so are all the rest of us," added the offended negress, moving towards the door.

"Don't go away in a huff like that—I'm sure I didn't mean to offend you, my good woman," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, coaxingly. "You must remember, Ariadne, that I am just come from Carolina, and that I never heard there of any blacks that were not slaves. So don't let's quarrel about that, but just tell me a little about the ladies and gentlemen that are boarding here. Have they none of them got any slaves or plantations?"

"No, ma'am," said the woman, sternly; "they'd scorn such wickedness, one and all of them."

"Well! to be sure, that is queer, after all I have heard—and in the very same identical country too! If that isn't enough to puzzle a traveller, I wonder what is?" returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, adding in a mutter, "When at Rome we must do as the Romans do, I suppose, and so I must pitch my voice for singing another tune."

She then proceeded with a good deal of her usual cleverness to examine and cross-examine the woman, till she had made out, pretty tolerably to her satisfaction, what style and order of people composed the party at the boarding-table, at which they were about to take their places; and having learned all she could on the subject, she dismissed the negress, first presenting her with a "levy" in token of her gratitude. She then sought her daughter's apartment, which was at no great distance from her own.

Patty was lying on the bed fast asleep; but as time pressed, Mrs. Allen Barnaby could not yield to her maternal tenderness, by permitting her to sleep on, but felt absolutely compelled to arouse her to the necessary duty of dressing for dinner. Patty grumbled and scolded, and, indeed, scrupled not to tell her attentive mamma that she was a great brute for waking her; but no such trifle as this could move the steadfast spirit of her high-minded parent.

"Don't lay there abusing me, there's a darling, but wake up this very minute, and dress yourself," was her reply. "And mind, Patty," she added, "that you dress yourself very carefully and very decently, if you please. Don't put on that fine showy low dress that you wore the other day, with the blue and pink bows, because I happen to know perfectly well that it won't do here. I shouldn't wonder, I can tell you, if we should be turned out of the house in no time."

"Stuff and nonsense!" replied the lately married lady; "I shall wear exactly what I like best, I promise you, ma'am, so you had better not bother me with any more such vagaries. I shall certainly desire Tornorino to bid you hold your tongue, if you do."

"Tornorino may chance to have the worst of it, my darling," returned her mother with the utmost good-humour; "so good-bye, dearest, and wear your dark-green gown, and a high collar, there's a love."

With these words Mrs. Allen Barnaby retreated, leaving her daughter not only very angry, but very much puzzled. Her Don had already been throwing out hints respecting the probability that her respectable papa might get into a scrape or two, if he did not mind what he was about, and had also declared that he should not be at all surprised if it ended by their being obliged to shift for themselves, and that he would not mind setting about it to-morrow, if they could only screw a few hundred dollars out of the old folks. To all of which Madame Tornorino had paid very little attention, supposing it the result of some trifling dispute or other that no ways concerned either her own comfort or her own interest. But now that she heard her mother talk of their "being turned out of the house in no time," she fancied these different warnings alluded to one and the same thing, but what that might be she was totally at a loss to conjecture.

Upon the return of her husband she told him of her mother's queer ways, and insisted in a manner, somewhat peremptory, that

he should tell her the short and the long of it at once, for that she was determined she *would* know what they all meant.

The Don shrugged his shoulders, and did not seem disposed to reply with the readiness that was evidently expected from him. He had, in fact, been very strictly charged by his father-in-law to say nothing to Patty upon the *accident* which had occurred at Big-Gang Bank, and he had tolerably well obeyed the injunction; but the Don hated difficulties of all kinds, and he was beginning to doubt whether it were worth his while to run the risk of being taken up as a suspected character every time the major played, with no better payment than being boarded and lodged.

It was now, however, very nearly the hour at which Mrs. Simcoe had informed them she punctually dined, and this was too sacred a ceremony, in the opinion of Don Tornorino, for it to be broken into by any discussion whatever; he accordingly gave his fair bride to understand that whatever information it was in his power to communicate, must be postponed to a future opportunity, and she had therefore, *bon gré, mal gré*, to descend to the dining-room very completely mystified as to what her respected parents were about. The major, who also felt that he had barely time enough to make his toilet, postponed all questionings of his wife for the moment, merely finding time to tell her that he had negotiated Mr. Hapford's bill without any difficulty, and the family accordingly sat down to table together, with considerably less unity of purpose than was usual with them.

The large, and neatly served dinner-table of Mrs. Simcoe was surrounded, exclusive of our travellers and her gentle self, by six American gentlemen and their six wives. They were all of them, at least, according to the opinion of Mrs. Allen Barnaby and her daughter, dressed more or less in the Quaker costume; the ladies being all habited with more attention to delicacy and neatness than either to fashion or splendour, and the gentlemen having little or no mixture of the chain and pin species of decoration, which usually distinguishes their countrymen.

The dress of Mrs. Allen Barnaby herself was also a model of propriety. The slight and floating drapery usually worn upon her ample shoulders was exchanged for a close fitting, white satin cape, trimmed with swan's down, which, though it caused her to endure sensations not very far removed from suffocation, made her feel herself, as she told the major afterwards, quite of a piece with all the rest of them, and much more likely to make her way among this straitlaced part of the population, than if she had made herself "fit to be seen," in the ordinary manner. This "making herself fit to be seen," by the way, was a phrase which, both in her daughter's vocabulary and her own, appeared to signify the exposing as much of their persons to view as could be conveniently managed by any possible arrangement of the sleeves and corsage; from which it may be inferred that they interpreted *fit* to be seen,

into *ready* to be seen, a gloss accepted, as it should seem, by many of their fair countrywomen, especially when preparing themselves for the dinner-table.

But whatever variations in *fitness* the fine judgment of my heroine might dictate, and adopt, according to circumstances, no shadow of changing in this matter was perceptible in the toilet of her young daughter; who came blazing into Mrs. Simcoe's dining-room precisely in the dress which her thoughtful mamma had requested her not to wear, and with such a remarkable deficiency of drapery about her shoulders, that the gentle lady at the head of the table had a sore struggle with herself as to whether she should or should not send for a certain mouse-coloured shawl from the next room to supply what was so evidently wanted. How this combat between meekness of spirit and severity of decorum might have ended, if nothing had occurred to interrupt it, I cannot say; but the usually silent business of eating and drinking had not advanced far, ere Mrs. Allen Barnaby bethought herself that, however foreign to the manners of the country conversation at the dinner-table might be, it was, nevertheless, her only chance at present for displaying those powers of mind upon which she rested her best hopes for continued success in the land to which fate and fortune had guided her steps. Having meditated for a moment or two as to how she should begin, she said to a mild-looking quaker gentleman on her right—

"May I ask you, sir, to be kind enough to tell me the name of the lady opposite to me?"

"Sarah Tomkins," was the concise reply; which certainly offered as little opportunity for continuing the conversation as any reply could do.

But Mrs. Allen Barnaby would never have been my heroine if such a difficulty as this could have checked her; it did *not* check her for a single moment, for she instantly replied—

"That is not the name I expected; for I fancied I had seen the lady before, and that she was called Morrice. It is a most extraordinary likeness, certainly. How odd it is, sir, isn't it, that sort of unaccountable resemblance that one sometimes sees between people in no way related to one another? For if that lady is not Mrs. Morrice herself, I don't think there is any chance of her being her sister, or cousin, or anything of that sort; because Mrs. Morrice's family are altogether English, and have never any of them emigrated to this country; and so much the worse for them, isn't it, sir? There never was such a glorious country as this, and that is what I have said to my husband, Major Allen Barnaby, every day since we have been here. Not, indeed, that he is in the least degree inclined to differ with me on the subject; he admires the country, and the charming people too, with exactly the same enthusiasm as I do. *That* is the major, sir, a little lower down on the other side, with full gray whiskers. A dear, excellent good

man he is, and so fond of what he calls the elegant peacefulness of this population, that if it was not for the rank he holds in the English army (and when he goes back he *must* be constantly with the Duke of Wellington again)—if it was not for this, he says he would certainly cut off his mustaches in order to look more like one of them.”

The quaker gentleman gently nodded his head for about the sixth time since she had begun talking, which seemed to be intended as a sort of civil assurance that he heard her, but he uttered no sound, save that inevitably produced by the act of eating. Mrs. Allen Barnaby here paused for a moment that she might herself eat a few mouthfuls, for she was exceedingly hungry, but having done this with as little loss of time as possible, she began again.

“Perhaps you are not aware, sir, of the peculiar interest which Philadelphia in particular has for English people, and for myself indeed beyond all others. My object in coming to this country was solely to obtain information on the state of the slave population throughout the United States, as I am engaged by the first publisher in London to write a work upon the subject.”

The quaker gentleman on hearing these words, crossed his knife and fork upon his plate, and turned himself round so as to command the side front of Mrs. Allen Barnaby's person. On perceiving the advantage she had gained, she performed precisely the same evolution herself, thereby bringing herself very satisfactorily face to face with the drab-coloured individual whom she wished to propitiate.

“Thee art writing on the subject of slavery?” he said, after looking at her steadily for a few seconds, and speaking in a tone that seemed to express a doubt if he had rightly understood her.

“Yes, my good sir,” she replied, casting down her eyes with great modesty. “I have been urged to undertake the important task by a personal application of the very highest kind; so high, indeed, that it would be inconsistent with etiquette did I particularise it further.”

“Thee must be urged to the undertaking by higher authority than any the earth can show,” said the quaker gentleman with considerable solemnity, and slightly raising his hand to indicate the region from whence it should come. “May I ask thee what are thy views upon the subject?”

An inferior mind might have been daunted a little by these words, and more still, perhaps, by the tone in which they were spoken, but they produced no such effect on Mrs. Allen Barnaby, on the contrary, she felt her courage rise as she perceived that she was perfectly right in the ground she had taken, and that she had nothing to do but adhere carefully to the plan she had so rapidly conceived, in order to insure for the future a degree of success fully as brilliant as that which she had already obtained. She

answered readily, therefore, but with her hand pressed upon her heart, her eyes solemnly raised, and her voice skilfully pitched to a tone of the deepest feeling—

“My views, sir, are those of a reflecting Christian,” that being the exact phrase which she had heard bitterly ridiculed by Judge Johnson, when he was describing the “cant of the abolitionists.”

“In that case, thee art about to do what every good man’s voice will be raised to bless thee for,” said the quaker gentleman. “If thee dost it, friend, to the best of thy power,” he added, “thee shalt find that, let thy learning and thy skill in authorship be great or small, thee shalt meet with the gratitude and good-will of a very large body of the stranger people amidst whom thy holy purpose hath brought thee.”

This concluding assurance was, of course, exceedingly welcome to the lady; but, nevertheless, there was something in the quaker gentleman’s allusion to the possibility of her not being an accomplished author, which she did not quite approve; and after a moment’s reflection, she said—

“I would never, dear sir, have ventured to trust my pen on such a theme, had not its earlier efforts been already approved in the most flattering manner by the best judges among my countrymen. Under my maiden name I have published many successful works; but, as my present object is not fame, but utility, I have determined, by the advice of one of the most exalted characters in England, both as to worth and station, *not* to let the name under which I have published be known as long as I remain in this country. My reason for this self-denying reserve is to be found in my earnest wish to see things exactly as they are, without running the risk of having my judgment warped by the species of flattering adulation which literary fame is sure to produce in this enlightened country. That the precaution was not unnecessary, we have already found; for, being determined to see everything by my own eyes, and judge everything by my own understanding, I prevailed upon my beloved and most indulgent husband to let me land on our first arrival from England at New Orleans—that great stronghold of the abominable system that my soul abhors. My honest wish was not to exaggerate in speaking of its effects, and the only way of being sure to avoid this, was by contemplating those effects with my own eyes. But it unfortunately happened that there was a gentleman at New Orleans who had seen me in Europe, and who recognised me as ———, as the author of the works to which I have alluded. The consequence of which was, that all the most important families in that part of the Union, came forward in a body to welcome me, hoping, as I suspect, that I might lend a pen which has been acknowledged to have some power, to advocating the atrocious system that reigns among them. You may easily believe, my dear sir, that their advances were not

very cordially received, but, of course, I could not avoid hearing an immense quantity of argument in favour of the system."

"And thee didst not find the arguments worth much?" he replied, with a gentle smile.

"Worth? Mercy on me, dear sir, they made me perfectly sick and ill. I never suffered so much from hearing people talk, in my whole life before."

All this did not pass amidst the silence of an almost wholly quaker dinner-table, without attracting the attention of every one seated at it. Mrs. Simcoe forgot Patty's distressing want of a shawl, while she listened to the discourse of her more prudent mother, and more completely still while observing the attention paid to it by her richest, and, in every way, most important guest, John Williams, the well-known quaker philanthropist. This gentleman, who had amassed a very handsome fortune as a Philadelphian banker, had, for some years past, fixed his residence at a handsome mansion, at the distance of ten miles from the city, making the boarding-house of Mrs. Simcoe, his well-esteemed cousin and friend, his head-quarters whenever he found occasion to revisit it. This good man was not only in every way entitled to respect, but possessed it so universally as to render the fact of his entering into conversation with Mrs. Allen Barnaby a reason amply sufficient to make every individual at the table, both male and female, desirous of conversing with her too. The knives and forks were either laid aside entirely, or else used so cautiously as to prevent any sound from that quarter interfering with the general wish of hearing what it was that the stout, high-coloured English travelling lady could have to say that should make John Williams listen to her with so much attention. But not even this universal feeling of interest in what was going on, could long postpone that strong American propensity to start up from the dinner-table as soon as hunger is appeased, which renders that great luxury of European life, *table talk*, almost unknown to them.

But this interruption, ill-timed as it seemed to Mrs. Allen Barnaby at the moment, was not sufficient to check the purpose of the good quaker to become, without any delay, better acquainted with her. Perhaps John Williams had never in his life looked in the face of a lady which he felt less inclination to look at again, than that of Mrs. Allen Barnaby. But what did that signify? John Williams felt that it was his duty to make himself acquainted with her, and it must, therefore, have been a very serious obstacle indeed which could have prevented his doing so. With his usual quiet, passive sort of decisiveness, the worthy quaker immediately made up his mind as to the manner in which this was to be brought about; and as soon as Mrs. Simcoe rose, a movement immediately followed by the rising of the whole party, he walked round the table to the place occupied by his wife Rachel, with whom all his journeyings, whether long or short, were ever taken, and said to

her, "Wife, thee must come with me to ask yonder foreign lady to go to thy parlour with thee."

The tall, stately, prim-looking Mrs. Williams instantly prepared to obey, but not without fixing a glance of the most unequivocal astonishment at the individual to whose side she was summoned. Had she been the very dirtiest of negresses, or the most wretched-looking of whites, no such feeling had been produced by it; but it would have been difficult for her to have imagined a face and figure that she would have thought less likely to attract her spouse than those of the person she was now approaching, as rapidly as the unchangeable sedateness of her pace would permit.

"Rachel Williams," said the good man, as soon as he had succeeded in bringing the strangely matched pair face to face, "Rachel Williams, I would have thee give the hand of sisterly fellowship to this stranger. Thee hast not told me thy name," he added, addressing Mrs. Allen Barnaby. "How be'st thou called!"

"My name," replied our heroine, with a smile, an attitude, and an accent, all intended to testify the extreme delight at this introduction, "My name is Barnaby, Allen Barnaby, Mrs. Major Allen Barnaby, and most happy do I feel in being thus permitted to present myself to those who must be so able to afford me effectual assistance in the important object I have before me."

"Thee must come with us to our own quiet parlour," said the good man, offering his hand to lead her, "and when thee art there thee canst explain fully, both to my wife and to me, not only thy object, but the means by which thee dost hope to accomplish it, and then we shall be able to discover in what way we may best be able to help thee."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby's thanks were profuse and ardent, and she yielded her plump hand to the thin fingers of the quaker with a flourish that she felt at her heart to be very like the manner in which she had once seen Mrs. Siddons lay her palm on that of King Duncan. But just as they had reached the door, with the fawn-coloured Rachel following close behind, it suddenly occurred to our heroine that it would be advisable that she should exchange a word or two with the rest of her party before she separated herself from them.

"I beg your pardon, my dearest sir, a thousand times, but you must, if you please, permit me to say one single word to my dear excellent husband, before I retire with you to your own apartments."

"Dost thee wish thy husband to come with us also?" demanded the amiable quaker.

"Oh no!" was the reply. "You are very kind—excessively kind, indeed; but my good major knows the business to which I am devoting myself, and as he has considerable confidence in me, dear man, he never interferes, for fear, as he kindly says, that he should puzzle the cause by interrupting me. But I just wish to

say one word to him, and to my daughter, the Lady of Don Tornorino, to prevent her being surprised at my not returning with them to our own rooms."

"Surely, surely," replied John Williams, standing back with his wife to let the rest of the company pass out, "we will wait for thee till thou art ready for us."

Thus sanctioned, Mrs. Allen Barnaby stepped back, and laying one hand on the arm of her husband, and the other on that of her daughter, she pushed them gently before her into the recess of a bow window, and then said in a whisper, winking a good deal, first with one eye, and then with the other, in order to make them understand that she had more to say than it was convenient to speak at that moment—

"I am going with these topping quakers into their sitting-room. I shall get on with them, never you fear. Good-by," and then glided back to her new friends, and in the next moment passed through the door with them, and was out of sight.

Patty and her father stood staring at each other for a moment, and then both laughed, while the mystified Don, who understood only that his august mother-in-law was gone somewhere, with a pair of the most incomprehensible people he had ever beheld, and that they were forbidden to follow, raised one of his black eyebrows to the very top of his yellow forehead, and the other within half an inch of it, while he waited till his wife had sufficiently recovered her gravity to reply to his somewhat petulant "Vat for?"

When at length the answer came, however, it was only in a repetition of his words, "Vat for, darling? I am sure I could not tell you if my life depended upon it, unless it means that ma's gone mad."

"No, no, Patty," said the major, recovering his gravity. "Do not alarm yourself. Ma is not gone mad, I promise you, but knows what she is about as well as any lady that ever lived. But upon my life, Patty, if we are all to sail in the wake of these prim quakers, you must alter your rigging a little, my dear, or you'll be left out of the convoy, and what's to happen then?"

"I sail in the wake of your detestable quakers!" exclaimed Patty, almost with a scream. "If there's any one thing on God's earth that I hate and abominate more than all the rest put together, it is a quaker; and if you think, any of you, that I mean to skewer myself up in a gray wrapper, and go theeing and thouing, to please them, and that for the sake of getting a morsel of daily bread to eat, you are mistaken."

This being uttered with a good deal of vehemence, and an angry augmentation of colour, while something that looked like tears glittered in her eyes, her father instantly lost all disposition to mirth, and replied in a tone of the most coaxing fondness—

"What in the world have you got into your head, my darling

Patty? You can't suppose, for a moment, that I would let any body plague you to do what you did not like? Did I ever do it since you were born, Patty? You know very well, dearest, that I never did, and that I always think it worth while to battle for you, whatever I may do for myself, so for goodness' sake don't begin to cry. You know I can't bear it."

"Yes," returned his handsome daughter with a sob, "I know all that very well, papa, I know that you have always been a great deal more good-natured to me than ever mamma was. But that makes little or no difference now, and I don't think it is at all right for married people to go on living as Tornorino and I do, just as if we were two tame cats kept to play with, with a basket to sleep in, milk to lap, and a morsel of meat to mumble. I don't like it at all, and I don't think the Don likes it at all better than I do."

The major probably knew by experience that when his Patty was thoroughly out of humour, it did not answer to argue with her; and therefore, without saying a single syllable by way of reply to the speech she had just uttered, he tucked her arm with a sort of jocund air under his own, and giving the Don a good-humoured wink as he passed him, led her out of the room, saying—

"Come, Patty, my dear, we have got a sort of holiday this evening, haven't we? Let us use it by going to the theatre. I saw abundance of fine things advertised, and I know you love a play to your heart."

Nothing could have been more judicious than this proposal; Patty appeared to forget all her sorrows in a moment, and springing forward with a bound that seemed to send her half-way up the stairs before its impulse was exhausted, exclaimed—

"That's the best thing you ever said in your life, pap. Come along, Don! I'd rather go to a play, any time, than be made a queen."

A few minutes' quiet walking through the clean and orderly streets of Philadelphia, brought them to the handsome Chesnut-street Theatre, and a few minutes more found Patty seated to her heart's content in the front row of a box very near the stage, and her still dearly-beloved Don close beside her. The major, however, who had taken his station behind, could not control the spirit of busy activity which was ever at work within him beyond the first act. He might pay himself for their tickets, he thought, at any rate, if he could but find a billiard-table; and saying, as he laid a hand upon the shoulder of both son and daughter, "You two can take care of one another," he slid out of sight and escaped.

Though the yellow-faced Don was neither so young nor so fresh as his wife, he enjoyed the amusement which he was thus peaceably left in possession of, quite as much as she did. The piece was Beaumarchais and Mozart's "*Barbiere di Seviglia*," adapted to the American stage, and despite the doubtful improvement of sundry alterations, the Spaniard was in ecstasies. He was himself

by no means a bad performer on the flute, and such a longing seized him as he watched the performer on that instrument, who sat almost immediately under him, once more to listen to his own notes upon it, that for some minutes after the opera ended, he was lost in reverie.

"What is the matter with you, Tornorino?" said his delighted wife, clapping her hands as she recollected that there was still another piece to be performed. "You don't enjoy it half as much as I do."

The Don looked silently in her handsome face for about a minute, and then said—

"Vat should you say, Pati, if—" the rest was whispered. But whatever he said pleased her so well, that the thoughts of it seemed to divide her attention with the gay afterpiece, for she eagerly renewed the conversation at intervals during the whole time it lasted. Nor did the discussion thus begun, end here; it appeared to have equal charms for both; it lasted them through their lingering walk back to Mrs. Simcoe's, kept them long awake after they retired to rest, and was renewed the very moment they were awake in the morning. The subject of these interesting conversations shall be explained hereafter.

CHAPTER XXXI.

No sooner were John Williams and his loving wife left to themselves by the departure of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, after one of the longest and most confidential tea-drinkings ever indulged in, than they exchanged looks full of pleasant meaning; and while the gentle woman sat silent from habitual reverence to her husband, the thoughtful man sat silent too for some short space, feeling half afraid of committing a folly by expressing how very greatly he was pleased by the adventure which had befallen them.

At length, however, the smiling silence was broken by his saying—

"Tell me, Rachel, without fear or favour, what dost thee think of our new acquaintance?"

Thus encouraged, Rachael Williams meekly replied—

"I rejoice because I see thee rejoice, John Williams, at finding that one has come amongst us who takes to heart the cause of the oppressed negro; but the joy of my own heart would be more full, and my confidence in the promised good more firm, if this help and aid came not in so gaudy a clothing. Besides, I think not that it is quite seemly, John Williams, to see a woman of such ripened age with ringlets and love-locks fluttering with every breeze that

blows. But if thee dost tell me that this is prejudice, John Williams, it shall go hard with me but I will amend it, and for the future see only the woman's purpose, and not the woman."

"No, Rachel, no," replied the worthy quaker; "I should be loath that thy dutiful submission to thy husband's word should be put to so hard a trial, or that thy faithful love should cost thee thy honest judgment. I like not the aged Englishwoman's love-locks better than thee dost, my good Rachel; but shall we quarrel with the help that the Lord has sent us, because it comes in a shape that is not comely to our eyes? What need is there that this foreign woman-writer should be as goodly and as gracious in my sight as thee art, Rachel? With her looks we have little to do; but trust me, if she knows how to write, she comes amongst us armed with a power which we who have a battle to fight would do wrong to treat lightly. This power she frankly offers to range on our side, and in my judgment it would be folly to reject it. How it comes to pass I know not, Rachel," continued John Williams, after pausing a minute or two in meditation, "but certain it is, that notwithstanding all the abuse and belittling which the Union from Georgia to Maine pours forth without ceasing against the old country, notwithstanding all this, there is not an English goose-quill that can be wagged about us, right or wrong, witty or dull, powerful in wisdom, or mawkish in folly, but every man Jonathan in the States is rampant as a hungry wolf that seeks his food till he gets hold of it, and straightway it is devoured as if his life depended upon his swallowing the whole mess, let him find it as nauseous as he may. Such being the case, Rachel, it behoves those who, like us, have undertaken to fight the good fight in the cause of an oppressed race, to welcome with joy and gladness the aid of every English pen likely to be bold enough to set down the truth in this matter. If the best written treatise that ever was penned were to come forth to morrow in favour of universal emancipation by John Williams of Philadelphia, thee dost know right well, Rachel, that it would only go to line trunks and wrap candles. But if this curly-wigged fat lady verily and indeed sets to work and prints a volume or two about the enormities she has seen in the Slave States, and the Christian good sense she will be able to listen to in the Free ones, we know, at any rate, that the books will be read, and that is something, Rachel."

"Yes, truly is it," replied his faithful wife; "and woe betide the folly that would stop so godly a work, because its agent came from a foreign land, where old women wear unseemly head-gear. It shall not be thy wife, John Williams, that shall show any such untimely attention to outward apparel."

"Thee speaks even as I expected to hear thee, Rachel, after the first effect of this large lady's finery was passed off; and now, dear wife, we will go on, hand in hand together, in helping and urging forward the good work."

Such being the state in which Mrs. Allen Barnaby had left the minds of her quaker friends, it scarcely need be doubted that with her penetrating powers of observation, she took her leave of them, extremely well satisfied with the result of her first Philadelphian experiment.

It was not, however, without a pretty considerable degree of fatigue that she had reached the point at which she had aimed. It is a wearying, and in truth a very exhausting occupation to go on through a whole evening labouring to appear precisely what you are not; and so perseveringly had Mrs. Allen Barnaby done this during the hours she had passed with the good quakers, that when she reached her own room she could not resist the temptation of going immediately to bed and to sleep, although the major was not yet returned from his search after sporting men and a billiard-table, and although she felt not a little impatient to report progress to him. But nature would have her way, and for that night Major Allen Barnaby heard nothing more from his admirable wife but her snoring.

Less silent and less sleepy were the pair that occupied the chamber on the opposite side of the corridor. It is quite time that the conversation which demonstrated the consequences of their evening at the theatre should now be recorded, as the results which followed upon it came so quickly, that I may otherwise be reduced to the necessity of narrating effects first and their causes after.

"And if you will do just exactly what you have said, my own beautiful darling," exclaimed Madame Tornorino, as soon as the door of their sleeping apartment was closed, "I will love and dote upon you as long as ever I live. And won't we have fun, Don? And won't we make the old ones stare? And, I say, Tornorino, won't we enjoy eating and drinking, and waking and sleeping, without being obliged to care a cent for any body, and with money of our very own, own, own, without saying thank ye for it, to any mortal living? Won't it be fun, Torni?"

"I no contradict you, ma belle," returned Tornorino. "It would be fun, if fun means *bien beau*, to do what we like, sans contredit from nobody. But we must tink, my beautiful Pati, *vraiment*, we must tink considerable before we give up the papa and the mamma and all that they have got to make us pardon quelques désagréments."

"Don't be an idiot, Don," replied his animated wife. "Upon my life and soul, Tornorino, if you do turn out a coward and a fool, I will run away from you as sure as my name's Patty. Do you think I don't know the papa and the mamma, as you call them, better than you do? And do you think I want to creep about half-starved, as you used to do in London, my fine Don? Not a bit of it, I promise ye. What the old ones have got, I shall have, you may depend upon that, let me do what I will to affront

them—and I won't be kept in leading-strings any longer, I tell you. So just choose between living with me or without me. I WILL go on the stage, Tornorino, that's the long and the short of it, in one word. If you choose to stand by me, good; that is what I shall like best, because, as you know, I dote upon you so; but if you plague me the least bit in the world by way of making me give up the scheme, I'll run away from you before you can say Jack Robinson."

"No, no, no, my Pati beauty," replied her husband, with a very tender caress, "I shot myself directly if you run away your beauty from me, I will indeed."

"And will you let me go upon the stage without trying to coax me out of it?" said Patty, shaking her head expressively.

"Yes, my angel, I will; only I would not have no pleasure at all, if we were only to get on just as I did once before myself when I tried in the orchestra of Drury Lane. I was very much near starving, my Pati!" said poor Tornorino, mournfully.

"Stuff and nonsense, darling," replied his wife; "you in the orchestra of Drury Lane was one thing, and I on the stage at Philadelphia shall be another. Besides I tell you, Don, that pap would no more bear to see me want anything, than he would bear to want it himself. Mamma likes me well enough, I believe, and is as proud of me as a peacock is of his tail; but pap is my sheet-anchor, and as I must know him rather better than you, Mr. Don, I'll just beg you not to trouble me any more by talking of starvation and such like agreeable conversation, for it's what I most abominate; and I'll just trouble you to remember that if you please, and never let me hear such a word again as long as you live."

The amiable Tornorino did but mutter one little word or two under his breath, which would have signified, if interpreted, that he thought he knew Major Allen Barnaby as well as most people, and then he pledged the honour of an *hidalgo* that his charming Patty should never again be tormented by any vulgar doubts, or fears on the subject of daily bread; and then they proceeded to discuss, in the most animated and agreeable manner, what sort of dress would best become the fair *débutante*, and this most important question decided, that of character followed after; in short, half the night was passed in arranging the preliminaries of Madame Tornorino's appearance upon the Philadelphian stage, which she felt confident would terminate her tiresome dependence upon "Pa and Ma," and make both her fortune and fashion for ever.

"Pa and Ma," meanwhile, were on their parts as meritoriously intent upon turning their talents to account as their enterprising daughter, and the early dawn found them in very animated discussion upon the best mode of effecting this.

The major had returned from his search after "some opening in his own way," in very ill-humour with the noble city of Philadelphia, declaring that, since he was born, he had never seen such

a collection of broad-brimmed quizzes ; and as to billiards, they knew no more about it than so many children.

"Then you should be the more rejoiced, my dear, that I am likely to make a good thing of it," replied his wife, after very attentively listening to this melancholy account. "If they don't know much about billiards, they do about books ; and the broad-brims have their eyes open wide enough, I promise you, on the enormous importance of securing on their side a person who is master of the pen, or mistress either, my dear, if you like the phrase better."

"That is all vastly well, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," replied the major, giving way to the rather strong feeling of ill-humour which his own abortive attempts had generated. "It is vastly well for you to strut and crow, because you find a parcel of idiots ready to be gulled by all the rhodomontade nonsense you are pleased to talk to them ; but will that enable us all to go on living in the style we have lately been used to?"

"I never talk to you when you are in a passion, my dear," returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, composedly, "for I know it does not answer."

"God knows, my dear, I don't want you to talk," was the conjugal reply ; "what I do want is, that you should understand that I mean to be off, and the sooner the better, for the place seems to be about equally dull, costly, and unprofitable—so you may set about packing as soon as you will. I shall be ready to start to-morrow at the very latest."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby remained silent for a minute or two, but the pause was not altogether occasioned by obedience to her husband's hint ; she was balancing in her able mind, during the interval, the comparative advantages of trusting to a good breakfast to ameliorate his ill-humour, or of disregarding his uncourteous wish for silence, and pouring forth upon him at once the brilliant history of her last night's success. Being a little afraid of him when he *was* in a passion (which to do him justice did not often happen), it is most likely that she would have chosen the former course, had he not suddenly said when preparing to leave the room—

"There is no good in mincing the matter ; I shall go at once and tell Mrs. Simcoe that we don't much like the place, and mean to be off to-morrow."

"Nay, then, I can keep silent no longer, Donny!" exclaimed my heroine, in the most Siddonian tone imaginable. "You know not what you say, major—you know not what you are about to do! Alas! how weak and wilful is the mind of man! How short, how very short a time ago was it, that you vowed you never would decide on anything without consulting me! Yet now, because you find a society of black—of gentlemen, who might be quite as likely to win money as to lose it, you resolutely tell me

that you are determined to leave the place, though I have every reason on earth to believe that I may speedily raise a very considerable sum here."

Major Allen Barnaby was by no means the most unreasonable man in the world, and, therefore, instead of bouncing out of the room upon hearing these reproaches, he turned round while in the very act of leaving it, and said, with something almost approaching to a smile—

"Come along then, wife, sit down, and tell me all about it at once, but don't make it very long, there's a good soul."

This uncivil restraint upon her eloquence was certainly painful; nevertheless Mrs. Allen Barnaby knew better than to notice it—nay, she even complied with the rude condition upon which she had been permitted to unburden her full heart, and did so as succinctly as possible, only permitting herself, after concluding her statement, to say—

"Now then, Major Allen Barnaby, I leave it to you to decide whether the chance of profit is greater from our remaining among these very particularly rich people, who are ready to worship the very ground I tread upon, or from our setting off again upon a wild-goose chase in the hope of meeting some fool or other who may be cajoled into losing money to you."

"I should vote for the staying beyond all doubt, wife," replied the mollified major, "if you could but contrive to make me see my way through all the theeing and thouing you have been so amusingly repeating to me, and to the solid cash that you expect to find at the end of it. We want *the ready*, wife—the cash, the rhino, the Spanish wheels, as they call their sprawling dollars, and, unless you can manage to clutch this, I'll tell you fairly that I would not give a gooseberry for all their civility, because, my dear, I don't know any stock in any land that I can buy into with it."

"Major Allen Barnaby," replied his wife, after having listened to him in resolute silence till he had ceased to speak, "wise as you are, you don't know the value of ready money one bit better than I do. That No. 1 comes first, I well know, and No. 2, let it be what it will, comes a long way after it. So you need not talk any more, if you please, about giving gooseberries in return for such breakfasts and dinners as we got at Big-Gang Bank. But, in justice to my own honest earnings, I think it is but fair to remind you that you *do* love a good dinner, Major Allen Barnaby, and that the getting it, day after day, as you did from the Beauchamps, and capital good lodgings into the bargain for nothing, will save dollars if it does not make them."

"All quite true, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," returned her spouse, mimicking a little her Siddonian dignity of tone. "But, nevertheless, you must please to observe that at this present moment, we are not one single cent the richer for all your palavering with the

slave-holders, but that my little games of piquet and *écarte* have left their traces very comfortably in my pocket-book."

"And much you would have enjoyed the comfort, Donny," said his wife, relaxing into a laugh, "if I had declined the poisoning, and left you to abide the *second* settling of your play account with the honourable Mr. Themistocles Joseph John Hapford."

"Yes, my dear," he replied, returning her laugh: "your poisoning was first-rate, and worth all your preaching, you may take my word for it. And once for all, wife, without any more joking and squabbling about the matter, you must make up your mind to understand that it won't suit my views, to go on travelling through the country, dressing as fine as lords and ladies, and playing agreeable from morning to night, without getting any more by it than just bed and board. I am not so young as I was, my good Barnaby, and I feel the necessity of looking forward a little, and making up something like a purse against old age and a rainy day. If I find that they are too much in my own way here, I'll be off to Madrid, or to Paris, or Baden-Baden. It's all one to me. I really don't care the value of a straw in what kingdom of the earth I set up my coining machine, but coin I must, wife, somewhere or other. If you will be so obliging as to give me the pleasure of your company through all these possible ins and outs by sea and by land, of course I shall be delighted; but if you unhappily decline it, and prefer remaining here, writing books for and against negro slavery, I am sorry to say it, but I shall be under the necessity of sacrificing your charming society, and setting off without you."

"And your daughter, sir?" said his wife, not a little provoked at the tone of this long harangue; "may I take the liberty of asking if you intend to make her one of your travelling party?"

"Why, yes, my dear, I certainly think I shall. Tornorino is very useful to me, and I rather suspect that he would think it more profitable to be in partnership with me than with you."

"This is all waste of time, major," said his wife, suddenly resuming her usual tone. "Will you agree to allow me one day's trial with these quakers? If the ready, the cash, the rhino, the Spanish wheels that you talk about do not appear tolerably ready and certain, I will agree to set off with you in whatever direction you like to go. Only one day! If I fail I will be ready to start by this time to-morrow."

"Then to this time to-morrow I give you," he replied. "But remember, my dear, your proofs of success must be pretty substantial before I accept them."

"Agreed," was her short reply.

And Mrs. Simcoe's breakfast bell making itself heard at the same moment, they left their room together, meeting the Don and his lady on the top of the stairs; and then, with every appearance of family confidence and harmony, they descended to the eating parlour together.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NOTWITHSTANDING that the general breakfast eating was performed at the usual American pace, Mrs. Allen Barnaby was the first who had finished the meal and quitted the table.

The departure of one or two of the boarders had caused an alteration in the juxtaposition of those who remained, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby was no longer seated next to her friend John Williams. But this change was by no means disagreeable to her; she felt that the time for mere chit-chat was past, however skilfully she might manage it, and therefore rather rejoiced at than regretted the necessity of suffering the good quaker to eat his morning meal in peace. Yet, even while divided by the whole length of the table from her new friends, she had found means to propitiate further their good opinion by the greatly improved fashion of her garments.

During the whole of the conversation with her husband which has been recorded above, her fingers had been notably and most ingeniously employed in altering a variety of little ornamental decorations which she thought were more elegant than prudent. From her morning gown she abstracted every bow, together with a deep trimming of very broad imitation black lace from the cape of it, which left this addition to her grave-coloured silk dress of such very moderate dimensions as entirely to change its general effect, and to give to her appearance a snug sort of succinct tidiness, such as it had probably never exhibited before.

The cap she selected for the occasion was one which owed almost all its Barnabian grace to a very magnificent wreath of crimson roses, which ran twiningly and caressingly round the front of it, and these being removed by the simple operation of withdrawing a few pins, left as decent a cap as any one would wish to see.

Of her half-dozen luxuriously-curling "fronts," she chose the least copious and the least curling, and having bedewed it with water from a sponge, induced its flowing meshes to repose themselves upon her forehead with a trim tranquillity that might have befitted a Magdalen. It was thus that she now encountered the friendly eyes of John Williams and his wife Rachel; and as it never entered into the imagination of either of them that the foreign lady should have thus metamorphosed herself to please them, they felt, particularly the worthy Rachel, some disagreeable twinges of conscience at remembering the scoffing remarks that had been made on the love-locks, when it now seemed evident that it must have been mere carelessness or accident, rather than design, which had occasioned the superfluous hair to flow so wantonly.

It was therefore with even more than the hoped-for degree of gentle kindness that Mrs. Allen Barnaby's proposal of paying them a visit in their own drawing-room was received, and ten o'clock precisely was named as the hour at which they should be waiting to welcome her. That Mrs. Allen Barnaby was punctual need not be doubted. Much indeed depended upon this interview. If she failed now, she felt that she was pledged to give up the authorship scheme, from which she not only anticipated much substantial profit, but which had already given her so much delightful gratification, that the thought of abandoning it was inexpressibly painful to her feelings. Her hopes, however, so completely outweighed her fears, that it was with a delightful consciousness of power, and the most cheering anticipations of success, that she gave her soft quaker-like tap-tap at the quaker's door.

"Come in," was uttered in the very gentlest of tones, and in the next moment my greatly altered heroine stood in straight-haired comeliness before the meekly approving eyes of her new acquaintance.

"The permission to wait on you thus early," she began, "is a kindness for which I can hardly be sufficiently grateful, for the work to which I have dedicated myself seems to press upon my conscience. I feel as if I were not labouring with sufficient devotion and energy on that which may perhaps involve the happiness of thousands. This is an awful consideration, my dear friends!"

"Thee art right, friend Allen Barnaby," replied John Williams. "It is in this manner that all those who meddle in so great an undertaking should feel. It is not so much insensibility to their frightful sufferings which the poor negroes have to complain of, as want of energy in the means adopted for their relief. Tell us frankly and freely, good friend, what may be the difficulty or embarrassment which is most likely to impede thy progress, and I pledge to thee the word of an honest man, that if John Williams can remove it, it shall be removed."

These were not words to be listened to with indifference by Mrs. Allen Barnaby. She was indeed considerably more delighted than she thought fitting to express; she had no objection to appearing grateful for the support so kindly offered, but she did *not* wish that the quiet quakers should perceive all the triumphant joy and gladness that she felt throbbing at her heart. She had contrived to learn, by one or two intelligent questions addressed to Mrs. Simcoe's *help*, that John Williams had very ample power to remove all such embarrassments and difficulties as at present beset her, and had he not now pledged his honourable quaker word to use in her behalf what power he had? Now then was the moment of projection, as the chemists say, now then was the very crisis of the experiment that was to prove whether she did indeed possess the precious secret by which palaver might be converted into gold, or whether she must henceforth

submit to the degrading position of a merely ornamental appendage to her more highly-gifted husband's establishment."

She preluded the answer which was to settle this important question by a deep sigh, and then bending forwards towards the little work table which supported the scissors, thimble, cotton-reel, and narrow morsel of fine lawn upon which the neat-handed Rachel had been employed when she entered, she remained for a few seconds supporting her head upon her hand in silence. Had attention been wanting in her audience, this piteous prelude would have been sure to command it, and when at length she spoke, not a syllable was lost on either John or Rachel.

"It is inexpressibly painful," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, slowly raising herself from her bending attitude, "to submit oneself even to the dictates of duty when they command us to do or to say anything that may be misconstrued into—alas! how shall I find a word to express what I mean that shall not sound too harshly?—into abusing the generous kindness of those who stretch forth the hand of brotherly fellowship to assist us?"

"Nay, now, friend Barnaby, I must not have thee speak thus," interrupted John Williams, with the most expressive intonation of benevolence. "Remember that thy work is our work, and that thought will remove at once all such idle embarrassments as those thee speakest of."

"Oh true! most true!" exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with renovated courage, and as if suddenly conscious that she had no feelings of which to be ashamed, but altogether the contrary. "Never again will I give way to such weakness! You will, then, my excellent friends, listen to me as to a sister, while I confess to you that my husband, devoted to me as he is, and kind, too, upon most points, does not partake of the enthusiasm which has brought me to this noble, but misguided country."

"Yea! verily! It is then as I feared, Rachel! But take courage, friend Barnaby, and think not that we shall be the less inclined to give thee assistance, because we find thee wantest it more. Thee speakest well, friend Barnaby, in calling this, our misguided country, noble; and well pleased am I to find that thee hast clearness of judgment enough to see that it is indeed noble; in simple truth, friend Barnaby, it is the very noblest and most glorious country on the face of God's whole earth; and thee knowest there are spots on the sun. But progress, progress, good lady, and let us know in what, and how far it is, that thy husband opposes thy purpose?"

"Perhaps," replied my heroine, mildly, "opposes is too strong, too harsh a word to use when speaking of the conduct of Major Allen Barnaby. The very indulgence which induced him to leave his own country, where his highly-exalted reputation gives him a position so peculiarly agreeable, in order to gratify my wish in visiting this, must for ever insure my gratitude. But the fact is, that unfortunately he does not see this momentous question con-

cerning negro emancipation in the same light that I do ; so strongly do we differ, indeed, that I am persuaded, though if I publish upon it, he will never come forward publicly to controvert my opinion, yet, that if I should not do so, he would be exceedingly likely to write upon the other side."

"Indeed," exclaimed John Williams, the smooth serenity of his countenance a little ruffled by the intelligence, "and dost thee think him capable of writing a work likely to produce any great effect?"

"It is strange for his own wife, and one who loves him too, as dearly as I do, to reply to such a question with regret, because it is only possible to reply to it in the affirmative," said she. "He has, perhaps, the most powerful talent of any man living in controversy. His wit, his eloquence—oh, it is something magical! and like many others, I believe, who are thus gifted, he certainly has pleasure in putting down what in this case he calls popular prejudice."

"This is heavy news, my good lady ; very heavy news, I promise thee. An European coming to this country and publishing a powerful book in favour of negro slavery will do the cause more harm than thee may'st think for. The strongest weapon which we have got to use against the avarice of our misguided, but high-minded countrymen, is the universal condemnation of Europe, and anything tending to weaken that would be a misfortune indeed."

"I am aware of it," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with emphasis, "and this it is that makes me feel the importance of my own undertaking. The major knows that I am employing myself in writing on this awful subject, every detail of which harrows my very heart, while he, alas! treats it all with most sad levity, and he has told me very positively, though I must say without the slightest harshness—the good major is never harsh to me!—but he has told me that although he will never interfere to prevent my writing on this or any other subject (for, in truth, he is foolishly proud of what I have done in that way), yet that, as he cannot agree with me in the views I have adopted, he should hold himself inexcusably weak were he to permit any great expenditure of money in travelling about, merely, as he expressed it, to enable me to strengthen my abolition prejudices. Upon his saying this, which occurred when we were at New Orleans, I asked him if he would object to my spending a small sum, not exceeding three hundred pounds, which he knew I had by me, as especially my own, in travelling from city to city of this majestic country, in order to become generally acquainted with it. To this he frankly answered, No. He knew, he said, that the trifle I have mentioned was intended for the purchase of some sparkling ornament, but that if I preferred seeing your gems of cities to looking upon gems of my own, he saw no good reason to oppose me. This sum, my dear friends," continued Mrs. Allen Barnaby, "is, I grieve to say, totally exhausted, and I am under

the terrible necessity of abandoning a work in which my very heart and soul are engaged, or of submitting to the embarrassing alternative of confessing this fact to you, and beseeching you to give me your opinion as to the possibility of raising, by subscriptions for my forthcoming volumes, such a sum as may enable me to continue my researches ; for, as you will readily believe, my principles forbid me to state facts with which I am unacquainted ; and if I cannot succeed in immediately raising a little money for the purpose of prosecuting my inquiries in the Free States, I shall be obliged to return immediately to England, and instead of publishing my own work, have to endure the intense mortification of witnessing the appearance of another of principles diametrically opposite. Tell me, therefore, my kind and excellent friends, if you conceive it would be possible for me to raise such a subscription as I speak of ? ”

John Williams and his wife listened to this animated, but somewhat long harangue, in the profoundest silence. Neither cough, sneeze, hem, nor even audible breathing, interrupted the deep stillness in which she had the advantage of speaking. On ordinary occasions Mrs. Allen Barnaby would have been fully aware of the advantage this gave her, for she by no means liked to be interrupted while speaking, but now she almost felt that the stillness was too profound, for it seemed even to communicate itself to the eyelids of her auditors, which never winked : the looks of John being steadily fixed upon her face, and those of Rachel as steadily directed to the carpet. She almost feared to cease speaking, lest this chilling atmosphere of stagnant silence should condense itself into an icy refusal, but stop at last she must, and did, and then it took at least a minute ere John Williams raised his voice to answer her.

Her heart beat a good deal during this interval, and she became anything in the world but sanguine as to the result. Nor was her acuteness altogether deceived as to the meaning of all this. If there be a form of speech which will act like an incantation upon all alike, and before which slaveholders and emancipationists, Calvinists and Unitarians, Catholics and Quakers, Yankees and Creoles, will all shrink with equal sensitiveness, it is a demand for DOLLARS. On every other imaginable theme, they may, and probably will, differ widely ; but on this they are unanimous.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby saw and felt this at her fingers' ends. But though this sensitive shrinking unquestionably was the first fruits of her eloquence, it was not the only one, neither was it the most lasting. She had arranged her arguments with great skill ; and when, as John Williams examined and cross-examined her, she recapitulated all the dangers which threatened the cause in which he was enlisted in case her object was defeated, it was soon easy to see that her eloquence was gaining ground, and his prudence losing it.

At this stage of the business, John Williams would have given a good deal if his wife would but have looked him in the face ; but she

was as far as possible from doing any such thing, making no other change in her attitude, after Mrs. Allen Barnaby had finished her opening speech, than what was absolutely necessary for the stretching out of her nice little white hand towards her nice little rose-wood work-table, and withdrawing thence the before-mentioned strip of lawn, to the hemming of which she again addressed herself with a pertinacity of industry which rendered all hope of her raising her eyes from it most completely abortive.

"Thee hast made a statement that it gives me great pain to hear," said John Williams, at length, in a tone that instantly turned the thoughts of Mrs. Allen Barnaby towards her packing up, and before he had uttered a second sentence she remembered with some satisfaction, that she had taken very few things out of their travelling recesses, and that if the worst came to the worst, she should not have a great deal of trouble in getting ready to set off, according to promise, on the following morning. But with all her acuteness, Mrs. Allen Barnaby did not yet quite understand the nature of a Philadelphian quaker.

The first feeling which displayed itself was naturally enough that which was common to every citizen of the great republic; but there were others which lay deeper, and which belonged both to the particular class and to the individual, which in the race of conflicting feelings were most likely to come in conquerors at last. But John Williams, though very far from being a dull man, was, nevertheless, not a quick one, and before he could fully make up his mind what he should say next, his interesting visitor rose, and assuming a look of very touching shyness, said—

"To give you pain in any way, my good sir, is the very last thing I would willingly do, and believe me, when I say that notwithstanding your evident unwillingness to enter actively into the business, I feel the most perfect conviction of your good-will to the cause, and am grateful for your kindness, though it cannot, as I perceive, be of a nature to serve me. Good morning, Mrs: Williams! Good morning, my dear sir!"

And thus saying, she moved towards the door, being, in truth, exceedingly desirous to get away, that she might indulge in the utterance of a few of the animated expletives which she felt trembling on her tongue, and set about packing as fast as she could. But her interview with the quakers was not over yet.

"Thee art over hasty, friend Barnaby," said John Williams, interposing his tall, upright person between his guest and the door. "In matters of business no one should ever be in a hurry. Sit thee down again, friend, sit thee down, and let us talk this matter quietly over."

They did sit down again, and they did talk the matter quietly over; so quietly indeed, so lengthily, so step by step, that the reader might have rather more than enough of it, were I to repeat word for word all that was spoken on that occasion. Suffice it to

say, that affairs wore a very different aspect, when at length Mrs. Allen Barnaby really did leave the room, from what they did when she first attempted to do so.

One feature only of the interview remained unchanged. Rachel Williams continued during the whole of it to maintain her industry and her silence, never once lifting her eyes from her hemming, and never once speaking a word.

Talking of the passions of a quaker may, to some people, I believe, appear like talking of the passions of a fish, but people so thinking cannot be natives of Philadelphia. The honest broad-brimmed abhorrence of slavery, and the hearty wish of bringing about a national abolition of it, does decidedly amount, in many instances, to a passion in the beautiful city of Grecian Banks, and flowery Catalpas. Our quiet-seeming friend, John Williams, was an instance of this, though his wife Rachel was not; for while she could not choose but remember (even if she had wished to forget it) that it was the same person who was now making a plain and specific application for dollars, that she had seen entering the dining-room the day before, the very emblem of all that a sober-minded female ought not to be, John himself had no room in his head or his heart for anything but the abolition question, and actually trembled when his conscience reminded him of the risk he had at one moment run, of suffering an ill-timed fit of avaricious caution to stifle an undertaking which promised such great advantage to the scheme that it was the first object of his life to advance.

It was therefore with a bright and triumphant eye that Mrs. Allen Barnaby met the inquiring glance of her husband, upon encountering him in the retirement of their own apartment, whither he had returned from an unprofitable morning stroll on purpose to receive her.

"You need not speak, my Barnaby!" he exclaimed, the moment he beheld her. "That you have succeeded, is just as easy seen as that you have a pair of the most expressive eyes in the world. And how in the world, my darling woman, have you contrived to screw money out of that parchment man?"

"I should be vastly sorry, major, if I thought that I should get no more than what my dear friend John Williams will disburse himself—though I have no fears either that he should fail me. But my projects are a good deal more extended than that, my dear, as you may perceive, if you will do me the favour of running your eye over this list of names—the most wealthy, the most respectable, and the most influential in Philadelphia, as I beg to inform you."

She then drew forth a large sheet of paper which she displayed before him, and on which were, in truth, inscribed about thirty of the first names of the city. To these persons, John Williams had promised to apply for subscriptions to Mrs. Allen Barnaby's book, giving her to understand, as he wrote each down, that on such an occasion she would be sure to receive a sum greatly exceeding the

price of many copies, for that he pledged himself to make them understand how vitally important to the undertaking was the raising a considerable sum at the moment.

"A considerable sum? I wonder what broadbrim calls a considerable sum—eh, my dear? Have you any notion?" demanded the major, with the saucy air of one not disposed to be easily contented.

"He mentioned no figures whatever, major—I cannot say that he did," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a slight frown. "But upon my honour, Donny, I don't think it would be wise just at present for us to stand out quarrelling with our bread-and-butter, only because we think it just possible that the butter may not be thick enough."

"I have no more idea of committing any such folly, than I have of building a church, my love, so don't alarm yourself," he replied. "Not only just at present, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, but just for ever, our calling and our profession will be to catch what we can. This is no bad trade depend upon it, even among Yankees, if the capital brought to it has a good deal of sterling brass, mixed with the gold of such a wit as yours, my Barnaby. Oh no, I have no intention, depend upon it, of declining these quaker dollars; nor can I express to you sufficiently, my charming partner, the admiration I feel for the brilliant versatility of your talents, nor can I behold the bold, not to say audacious approach towards puritanical attire which your appearance at this moment exhibits, without feeling that my happy destiny has mated me with a mind worthy of union with my own."

This flourishing compliment, which was accompanied by a low bow, made the lady get up and place herself before the glass, and as she stood there with her hands primly crossed before her, both husband and wife laughed heartily.

After this little indulgence of light heartedness, the well-matched pair entered upon a business-like discussion of their immediate arrangements. It was decided between them that Patty should be bribed by some new article of finery to be worn elsewhere, to make herself somewhat more decent in attire at the dinner-table, and also that Mrs. Allen Barnaby herself should lay out a few cents in mouse-coloured ribbon, and that the major and his martial mustache should keep out of the way, on pretence of botanising, in order to avoid the too obvious incongruity of appearance between them. This *botanising* notion was due to the ready invention of my heroine, and was rewarded by a fresh burst of conjugal admiration.

This very pleasant conversation ended by the major informing his wife, that although he had no hope whatever of *doing much* during the time they might find it desirable to remain under the patronage of her quaker friends, he was nevertheless not without hope of *doing something*, for he had found out two public billiard-

tables, which, though apparently carrying on business a little under the rose, would enable him to pass his time without having to reproach himself with that worst of all possible faults, *idleness*, which in his case, as she conscientiously observed, would be worse than in that of most others, inasmuch as he knew himself to be blessed with a degree of ability which rendered the employment of it a positive duty.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DURING the space of ten days or a fortnight, the sincere and steadfast-purposed John Williams was fully occupied in canvassing among his friends and acquaintance for such substantial patronage for Mrs. Allen Barnaby's work upon "Slavery in the United States of America," as her peculiar circumstances rendered necessary. Of all canvassing this species is decidedly the most difficult, let it be carried on where it will; but John Williams was not a man to withdraw himself from an enterprise merely because he found it difficult, and at length his perseverance so far succeeded that he ventured to announce hopes to his client of being able to raise the respectable sum of five hundred dollars, provided she would agree to make over the copyright of her forthcoming work to a quaker bookseller, who on that condition had agreed to undertake not only the publication of it, but also the collecting the promised subscriptions for the purpose of paying them over *in advance* to the authoress.

Perhaps my heroine never gave a more decided proof of ready cleverness than on this occasion. She would joyfully have accepted a single dollar in exchange for all the profit she actually anticipated from the publication of her unborn production; but on receiving this magnificent proposal from John Williams, she started, shook her head, sighed, dropped her eyes, and for the space of a minute and a half, exhibited with admirable skill all the symptoms of great disappointment, borne with meek patience and resolute philosophy.

"Thee dost not like this proposal, friend Barnaby?" said the good quaker, looking at her rather timidly. "Thee dost not think five hundred dollars will suffice for thy present necessities?"

"Not so, my dear sir," replied the admirable woman, with a modest humility of manner that was very striking; "the sum you name would be quite sufficient for the humble style to which I shall for this object reduce my manner of travelling. It is not *that*, my kind friend, which causes me to hesitate. But I confess to you that the idea of parting with the copyright of a work which I have

reason to believe will be very profitable, does startle me. I cannot but indeed consider it equivalent to parting with several thousand dollars."

"Indeed!" returned John Williams, feeling, good man, very much ashamed of having been made the organ of so unjust and ungenerous a proposition. "If that be the case, my good lady, I withdraw the offer with many apologies for having made it."

"Nay, dear sir, do not say that," she replied. "To you I must ever feel deeply grateful; and moreover, my good friend, we must not lose sight of my very peculiar position. I do not feel that I have the power to refuse this offer, though the terms of it do seem rather severe, for in fact, without the assistance it promises I can do nothing, and therefore, as you perceive, I must perforce accept it, or abandon at once and for ever an undertaking in which every feeling of my heart is engaged."

"I do believe thee, I do believe thee," replied the quaker, deeply touched by the generous devotion of the poor negro's advocate. "But thy goodness must not be the means of robbing thee of thy fair hopes of honest profit from thy labours. I must see my friend the bookseller again, and endeavour to bring him to reason."

"Perhaps, sir," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, timidly, and with the air of a person who knows that he is asking for a good deal, "perhaps, sir, your friend the bookseller might agree to give me one quarter share of the profits arising from the sale of the work after all expenses, including the advance of five hundred dollars, shall have been paid?"

"Nothing can be fairer or more liberal," replied John Williams, with an eagerness of manner that was almost unseemly in a quaker; but in fact he was greatly delighted at the idea of settling the business in a manner that he thought would be agreeable to all parties; and immediately seizing the stick, that ever stood ready in the corner (his ample beaver being already on his head), he declared his intention of immediately seeing the individual whose consent it was necessary to obtain, and left the room with a promise of bringing home the stipulated sum with him, which he would deliver to her, he said, at the same hour on the following morning, being engaged out to dinner with his wife, which would prevent their meeting again that day.

Mrs. Allen Barnaby rose from her chair at the same moment that he rose from his, for she had no inclination whatever to remain *tête-à-tête* with Rachel.

That very sensible woman and exemplary wife did not take any trouble to conceal from my quick-sighted heroine, that her liking for her did not increase by their lengthened acquaintance. In fact, though she strictly kept her word to her husband, and did not permit her own feelings or prejudices to be any hindrance to the work which had for its object the welfare of the negro race, she did, in honest truth, hate and detest Mrs. Allen Barnaby as much

as it was well possible for a Christian quaker to hate anything. She had hailed the first mitigation of brilliance in her as a symptom of seemly respect to the society of quakers in general, and to John and Rachel Williams in particular. But not content with this, Mrs. Allen Barnaby had gone on, day by day, adding little quaker *et ceteras* to her fitting out, which showed upon her like a white rose stuck in the unshapely ear of an elephant, till the worthy Rachel, who though a quaker, had enough of the woman in her to see through such trickery, felt persuaded that she was nothing better than a great overblown cheat, and in pursuance of this unpleasant persuasion spake to her little, and looked at her less, all which being carefully noted by my observant heroine, it is no great wonder that she bustled out of the room the very moment after John Williams left it, with no other leave-taking than a rapidly-enunciated, "Good morning, ma'am."

Nothing could exceed the air of gay good-humour with which the well-pleased major received his lady's account of what had passed; they were unquestionably a most happily-assorted couple, and as if to take instant advantage of the peculiar hilarity of their parents, the Don and his wife knocked at the door of their room just as my heroine had concluded her narrative, and declared that they were come with a joint petition that the whole party might go to the play that evening. No favour was ever asked at a more propitious moment; both the father and mother were in too happy a state of spirits not to relish any proposal the object of which was gaiety and amusement.

"Off with you, then, Tornorino," exclaimed Patty, joyously, "and get the very best places you can."

"Perhaps it will be better for me to undertake that part of the business, especially as I have a notion that one and all of you will look my way for money to pay for them," said the major.

"You are always a dear darling, papa, that I will say for you," replied his daughter, her bright eyes positively dancing in her head with glee; "but you can pay the Don, you know, when he comes back, and you'll find that he will get capital good places for you."

Thus reassured, the major gave up the point, and the interval of the messenger's absence was spent in very lively chit-chat by the parents and their darling daughter, who, to say truth, was not always equally disposed to bestow the advantage of her charming spirits upon them, when no other person was present to share their admiration.

The Don, however, did not linger on his way, but returned with two tickets for front places in one of the best boxes in the house; and these he presented to his august mother-in-law, informing her at the same time that they were the only very good places left, but that he had made an acquaintance with one of the gentlemen of the orchestra who had promised him an order for himself and his wife.

"Then Patty shall go with her mother, Tornorino," said the major, good-naturedly. "I won't take a good place while Patty has got a bad one."

"It not be a bad one," returned the Don, earnestly. "It be a very good one."

"Good or bad, Torni," returned his wife, with great vivacity, "it will be no treat to me, you know, if I am to be parted from you, my darling. No, no, Mr. Pap, I know you mean to be very kind, and I thank you accordingly, but I shall sit with the Don, be sure of that."

The major returned some laughing compliment to her pigeon-like constancy, and promised not to interfere with it again.

As my heroine's particular friends were absent from the dinner-table that day, she had little or no opportunity for conversation, for her previous devotion to John Williams had prevented her taking her usual measures to obtain acquaintance with any one else. But Patty was more than usually talkative, and before the repast ended had addressed the interesting question, "Are you going to the play to-night?" to no less than five different persons. Three of these being very "dry" quakers, answered in the negative with something not far removed from a grunt or a groan; and of the two others, one said he did not know, while the other so far encouraged her prattling propensity as to inquire if there was to be anything particularly worth seeing in the performance that night.

Madam Tornorino's first reply to this very natural question did not sound very civil, for it consisted in a short loud laugh, which seemed to indicate that the person who had asked it, had been guilty of an absurdity; but having indulged in this mirthful propensity for a minute or two, she settled her features into more than usual gravity, and said—

"Upon my word, sir, I don't quite know, but we heard there was to be a new performer; didn't we, Don Tornorino?"

"*Mais oui*," returned her husband, bowing to the inquirer, "dere will be a *début* to-night."

"Then I shall certainly go," said the gentleman to whom he addressed himself; adding, "that is just what I like best."

And hereupon Patty laughed again; upon which her mother, a good deal shocked at her rudeness to the very well-dressed gentleman who appeared to occasion her mirth, said in an audible aside to the major—

"The dear creature is in such spirits at the idea of going to the theatre to-night, that she is ready to laugh at everything." An observation which was fully justified by her daughter suddenly clapping her hands, with the most *naïve* appearance of irrepressible glee, and again bursting forth into a fit of merriment so genuine, that it was almost impossible not to join in it.

"What were you laughing at, Patty?" said her father, taking

her arm as the party were dispersing after dinner, "I declare, my dear, I think you grow younger, as well as handsomer, every day. Doesn't she, Tornorino?"

"Oh! she is a *bien belle femme*," replied Tornorino, at the same time whispering something in her ear.

"And you are a beautiful man, my darling," she replied, withdrawing her arm from her father. "And he is going to give me another treat," she added; "for he says I must take a delightful walk with him before the play, and so I shall set off this very moment."

"Why, Patty, you will be tired to death," said her mother, "so dreadfully hot as it is. Upon my word you had much better lie down instead of trotting out in the sunshine."

"Thank'e for nothing, mamma," replied the lively beauty, snapping her fingers. "My husband always knows what is best for me, don't you, Don? So good-by, dear pap and mam, and the next time you see me, I hope you'll find that I am not at all the worse for my walk."

"Stay, Patty, stay," cried her father, calling after her as she walked off towards her own room with her Don; "I suppose you mean to come back in time to walk to the theatre with us."

"Upon my word, I don't suppose any such thing," returned his daughter, gaily. "At any rate, pap, you had better not wait for us," she added, "because as we are not going to sit together, there is no use in our bustling back just to be in time for you. I won't say but what I shall spend a 'levy' that I have got in the corner of my pocket, in treating the Don with an ice, so that most likely we shall not come back at all."

As no very reasonable objection could be made to this conjugal arrangement, the young couple were suffered to walk off without further opposition, while the seniors entered their own retreat together.

"Perhaps it is quite as well, major," said my heroine, "that they should leave us a little to ourselves this evening, for it is quite necessary that we should talk over what we have got to do next. I suppose we may reckon upon receiving these five hundred dollars to-morrow morning, and the sooner we can be off afterwards, the better I presume you will be pleased."

"Decidedly, my Barnaby," replied her husband. "But don't you think, my dear," he added, after meditating upon the subject for a minute or two, "don't you think that there will be something rather awkward in our running away the very moment you have got the money from them? Don't you think it will look odd?"

"Not the least in the world, Donny," replied his wife, with very prompt decision. "You forget that the very purpose for which I am to receive it, renders it absolutely necessary for me to travel with all the perseverance and activity possible into the other Free States. New York, you know, is one of them, and as

it is there we most wish to go, why should we not set off for it to-morrow? There are steamers going two or three times a day."

"If *you* have no objection, my dear, I am sure *I* have none; for to tell you the truth, I never hated a place so much in my life," returned her husband. "I never sit down to table without feeling as if I were put in the stocks. Confound their solemn faces, they positively give me the cramp."

This short dialogue sufficed to settle the question as to what they were to do next, and that no time might be lost, they employed themselves till it was time to set off for the theatre, in collecting together whatever had been unpacked, and putting all things in order for departure.

"There!" said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as she turned the key of her trunk with a very satisfactory snap, "now I shall be able to help Patty to-morrow; for, as we well know, she is always behind-hand."

Having completed this business, and been favoured with an early cup of tea in their own apartment, they set off for the theatre.

"Buy a bill, Donny," said my heroine, as they passed through the lobby. The request was complied with, and having reached the places secured for them, the major politely placed the play-bill in his lady's hand. Her spectacles were immediately applied, for alas! the beautiful Barnaby had reached the time at which they were necessary, and she proceeded to examine the bill of fare for the evening's amusement.

"Read it aloud, my dear, for you know I can't see in this owl's light," said the major.

The lady obeyed, and read, "The Merchant of Venice."

"Ah! that's a very good play," observed the major; "I remember seeing it in London. And who is the new performer Patty talked about?"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby applied herself anew to the play-bill, and read aloud, "The part of *Nerissa* by a lady from England, being her first appearance."

"Oh! then, it is only some English actress who has never played here before," said the major. "It does not mean a first appearance."

"I suppose not," replied his wife. And then she obligingly read aloud the other parts of the bill, even to the name of the printer. This done, they both set themselves to examine the house (for they had arrived unnecessarily early), and criticised all the people who came into it; and in this way they beguiled the time till the curtain rose.

When the scene changed from Venice to Belmont, the stage was for a moment unoccupied and then two well-bedizened ladies entered at the farther end of it, and walked forward towards the footlights, for the first half of the distance in silence, and then con-

versing. The shorter of the two actresses was the favourite American Portia of the day ; but the burst of applause which greeted their *entrée*, was evidently as much intended for the maid as the mistress, her novelty being as cordially greeted as the well-known reputation of the other.

"What a lovely woman !" was exclaimed by many voices at once.

"The stage is full of dust," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, rubbing her eyes ; "I can't make out their features at all."

The major applied his opera-glass to his eye, and remained in contemplation of the fair creatures before him for several seconds. At length removing the glass from his eyes, and turning short round towards his wife, he whispered almost in her ear—

"By all that's sacred, wife, that girl in pink is Patty !"

"Impossible !" exclaimed the portly lady, looking very much as if she intended to clamber upon the stage over the front of the box, the orchestra, and all other obstacles. "She dare not, Donny ! She dare not for her life !"

The greatly irritated major did not exactly reply in words, "she dare do anything," but his tremendous frown said it for him, and by the time my heroine had herself looked through the glass, the same disagreeable truth impressed itself on her mind also, and she exclaimed, in a rage that was equally ill-timed and unprofitable—

"True enough, sir. And who is it that has spoilt her from first to last, and taught her in all ways to be an undutiful monster ?"

Mrs. Allen Barnaby was by no means accustomed to give way in public to those little eruptions of warm temper to which she was constitutionally liable ; but now the well-behaved major began to fear that she would lose all command of herself, and multiply all the evils of the exposure his high-spirited daughter was bringing upon them.

"We had better come away, my dear," he said, in the gentlest accents possible. "Nobody will know anything about her if we keep our own secret."

Fortunately the house was by no means crowded ; and in the box they occupied, the only persons besides themselves in it, were two lounging men, whose whole attention seemed devoted at this moment to the stage. And no great wonder that it should be so. The very striking face and figure of Patty being just then displayed in the manner to make both as striking as possible ; and though face, figure, attitude, and dress, might all perhaps have been classed as meretricious in their coarse attractiveness, there was, nevertheless, something of youthful brilliance in her appearance which most people would have found it difficult, at the first glance, to turn away from.

Whether either father or mother had sufficient of what may be called *decent* refinement, to feel all the painful degradation of such an appearance, may be doubtful ; but both the one and the other

were instantly aware, that at the moment when they were endeavouring to push their fortune among the wealthy quaker magnates of the land, such an exhibition of their daughter must be fatal. And this was certainly the feeling which induced them both, without further consultation, to leave the theatre, that they might themselves be as little as possible identified with her.

My unfortunate heroine suffered her common-sense to get the better of her anger at this critical moment, and suddenly ceasing her ejaculations, prepared herself to follow her husband's advice, and leave the box.

It was, as has been already stated, the front seat of this box that they occupied, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby had deposited her shawl on the cushion in front of it. As she took hold of this shawl for the purpose of drawing it away, she became sensible that a hand, or some other impediment, prevented its yielding to her pull, which she then rendered rather more powerful, but in vain, the shawl yielded not, and the major, who perceived this, immediately bent forward, with a hasty movement, to discover who or what it was which thus delayed the exit that he so impatiently desired.

This movement of his was accompanied by one precisely similar on the part of his wife, and thus at the same instant they both perceived the black and yellow physiognomy of their noble son-in-law turned up to greet them, while a flute, which he held in the hand not occupied by the shawl, informed them, by its very intelligible hieroglyphic, why and wherefore it was that he had taken his place in the orchestra of the Chesnut-street Theatre. There was not the slightest mixture of doubt or fear in the expression of the features thus turned up towards them; on the contrary, the Don had probably never met the eyes of his parents-in-law with an aspect so entirely free from both. He seemed to think it was a moment of common triumph to them all; and after having looked at them both with a congratulating grin, he turned his head towards the stage just as Patty was pronouncing, with a very majestic wave of the right arm—

Your father was ever virtuous—

and kissing the tips of his fingers, waved the caressing salutation towards her, and pronounced the word "Bravo!" as if involuntarily, but with a degree of unction that drew many eyes upon him. Infinitely provoked at this very unnecessary additional annoyance, the major jerked the shawl very unceremoniously from his fingers, and muttering "Come along, for heaven's sake!" to his wife, hurried out of the box.

Not one syllable was spoken by the major between the theatre and the boarding-house, a species of moody silence which appeared to produce a very imposing effect on his wife; for though she was well nigh bursting with impatience to speak of what had occurred, she produced no sounds more articulate than sighs and groans, till

they were fairly concealed from all eyes and ears, in the retirement of their own apartment.

"How many of your boasted five hundred dollars, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, do you expect to get from your quaker friends after this?" said the major, throwing himself into an arm-chair, and freely using the refreshing friction of his silk handkerchief upon his heated brow.

"Not a single cent of it, Major Allen Barnaby, if the broad-brims find it out. But we must be quick, my dear, quick as thought. You will do what you like, of course; but this is what I should propose. Let us sit watching here till the Williamses return. I have heard them say that they are never late. The moment I hear them enter their room I will go to them. No! I don't think I could stand that either. The steady look of her light gray eyes always disconcerts me. I'll write, major, that's what I'll do. I will write to him."

"And pray, my dear, if I may be so bold," he replied, with something like a sneer, "what do you mean to say?"

"You shall see, major, you shall see; of course I won't send it if you should disapprove."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby said she would be quick, and she was so. In a very short space of time she put the following lines into the hands of her husband:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received a letter from a friend of mine at Washington, who is aware of the object which brought me to this country, informing me that one of those dreadful scenes of abomination, the sale by auction of negro slaves, is to take place there on the 15th. If I start by the five o'clock boat to-morrow morning, I shall be in time to witness this, and I feel certain that a description of it written on the spot will do more towards impressing my readers with the emotions I wish to inspire, than any other particular upon which I could employ my pen. You know, my dear sir, from the entire unreserve with which I have explained to you my situation, how I am circumstanced at this moment with respect to money, and will therefore fully comprehend of what great importance it will be to me that I should receive the subscription you have raised for me *to-night*. Should you, my dear sir, have failed in obtaining for me the contingent advantage we talked of in case of an extended sale of my work, I will consent, under the peculiar pressure of the moment, to dispose of my interest in it altogether, for the five hundred dollars that have been offered me. This sacrifice will be vexatious, but I feel that I ought to submit to it, rather than fail to be the eyewitness of a scene which is calculated to throw so much striking odium upon the system that my soul abhors. I await your reply to this with very anxious impatience. If it be favourable, I shall feel myself ever bound to you, and shall proceed with renovated zeal and courage in my enter-

prise ; but if otherwise, I fear I must abandon it altogether, as my excellent, but, on this point, mistaken husband, declares that his duty as aide-de-camp and private secretary to the Duke of Wellington, will render it impossible for him to indulge me by prolonging much further his absence from home. I remain, dear sir, with the most lively sense of your benevolent kindness, your faithful,

“Humble servant,

“MARTHA ALLEN BARNABY.”

Major Allen Barnaby, who really was very proud of his wife, read this epistle twice over with a very approving smile, and then said—

“I should be puzzled to improve it, my dear, I promise you. But there is one doubt suggests itself, my Barnaby. What think you would be likely to happen if this broad-brimmed Jonathan should chance to know that no such sale as thee talks of is going to take place?”

“Thee need not alarm theeself,” she replied in the same tone ; “I am too old a soldier to hazard the success of a stratagem by any such risk.” And extending her hand to the other side of the table, at which she had been writing, she took up a newspaper, and handed it to him, pointing out the particular passage she wished him to peruse.

This was an advertisement of the sale she had mentioned in her letter, and which, by great good luck, she remembered to have read, when she certainly had little thought of turning it to such good account.

“Good! Capital!” exclaimed Major Allen Barnaby, with much energy. “If you do but get these five hundred dollars, my dear, I shall not care *that* (snapping his fingers) for Patty’s foolish frolic. I hate this place, and all the people in it, and shall be heartily glad to get away from it, I promise you. Not but what I shall be devilishly provoked if these two fools, Tornorino and his wife, are the cause of your losing the reward of your cleverness, which you most certainly will do if your beloved John and Rachel hear of it.”

“They are perfectly welcome to hear of it to-morrow at breakfast time, Donny,” returned my heroine, folding and sealing her letter. “And now ring the bell.”

The major obeyed, Ariadne appeared, and the important letter was despatched.

On such occasions every moment seems an age ; nevertheless, the answer arrived so speedily, that it was received with the word “already!” pronounced in rather tremulous accents by Mrs. Allen Barnaby. But no sooner had her fingers touched the envelope, than hope took the place of fear, for the packet had evidently more than one inclosure, and the moment after, hope gave way before certainty ; for on opening the said packet, two bills for two hundred

and fifty dollars each fell out of it, together with a short letter and a long paper within it. The letter ran thus:—

“Thee art right, friend Barnaby, in wishing to see with thine own eyes the actual sale by auction of our unhappy fellow-creatures. For this cause I am ready and willing to hasten the business between us to its conclusion; wherefore I send thee five hundred dollars, together with duplicate engagements from the bookseller, by the which thee wilt perceive that an ultimate interest in thy work is secured to thee. If thee wilt sign one of these papers and send it back, the business will be settled between us for the present. When thy work shall be ready for publication, thee mayest send it directed to John Williams, Philadelphia, and then I will promise thee to be watchful and faithful for thy interests, and take care that when the costs of publication, together with the advance, shall be liquidated by the profits arising therefrom, thy stipulated share of all such profits as shall accrue afterwards, shall be punctually forwarded to thy address.

“Fare thee well,

“From thy friend,

“JOHN WILLIAMS.

“*Post Scriptum.* The black servant, Ariadne, has orders to wait for the agreement to which thee art to affix thy signature.”

Having read this letter through, Mrs. Allen Barnaby placed it in the hands of her husband, with an expressive “hem;” and then with a sort of gentle sigh, as if things might have been better with her, she took up the two bills and placed them in a purse, which she drew from her pocket; after which she cast her eyes over the duplicate engagements, signed one of them, placed it in the hands of Ariadne, and dismissed her.

There was a good deal of genuine fun in the look with which the major contemplated his lady as the door closed, and they found themselves again alone. My heroine, for the first moment or two, ventured not to utter any articulate sound in return, but pursed up her mouth, and twinkled her eyes. But as she listened to the retreating steps of Ariadne, she took courage and ventured to say—

“I told you I would be quick, Major Allen Barnaby, and I hope you think that I have kept my word?”

“My dear, you are an angel,” was his satisfactory reply; adding, however, “but for all that, my Barnaby, I feel as if we were sitting upon a mine. Just fancy their hearing that your daughter was a strolling-player, and your son-in-law first flute in the orchestra!”

“They may hear *that*, Donny, or anything else within the reach either of truth or invention, as soon as we are beyond reach of hearing *them*, and that we shall be, my dear, before they all meet

at breakfast to-morrow ; till then, I think, our secret may be considered as safe."

The major agreed that this was certainly probable, and at once, without indulging any more in speculation on the subject, they both set to work upon the necessary business of the final packing up, and had very satisfactorily completed all they had to do in that way, when Don Tornorino and his lady knocked at the chamber-door.

It had been previously agreed between the angry parents that the present was no time for remonstrance or reproach, and all that was uttered of either was contained in the information that after this appearance, in public, it would be impossible for any of them to remain in the city, that everything they could themselves do in the way of preparing for departure, had been already done, and that the Don and his wife, instead of retiring to rest, must immediately set about the same work for themselves, unless, indeed, they had made such terms with the manager of the company they had joined, as might enable them to support themselves without further assistance—in which case they certainly need not trouble themselves about preparing for removal.

Patty clapped her hands and burst into a loud laugh, but her Don stood aghast, and expressed by his countenance every species of humility and repentance, that the most severe parents could require. He knew, though his madcap wife did not, that his engagement with the manager consisted solely in having obtained permission for himself and his wife to appear—his lady on the stage, and himself in the orchestra. The result of which experiment had been, that the musical part of the establishment had declared that they could not and would not play with Don Tornorino, for that it was a damnation bore to be told every other minute that they were playing out of time, an accusation which, whether just or unjust, they being, one and all, native free-born Americans, were not very likely to take in good part ; so that, in fact, he had brought away with him nothing but his *congé*. His handsome wife, however, had had somewhat better success, having received sundry rounds of applause when she appeared in the clerk's dress ; which, to say truth, became her extremely well, so much so, indeed, that the manager had announced a repetition of the piece for another night of the current week, which had been very favourably received by all the clapping and thumping part of the audience.

This convinced the Don at once that his lady was a theatrical treasure, and while she was in the act of exchanging the much-admired clerk's dress for her usual habiliments, he made his way to the presence of the manager, and stating the necessity for an immediate decision, requested to know what terms Madame Tornorino and himself might hope for. What the answer was in his own case has been already stated, but in that of his lady it was rather less decisive.

"Your wife, monseer, has no more notion of acting than a possum," said the manager; "but I expect, too, that she is a considerable fine young woman, and therefore I shall have no objection to engage with her for a reasonable salary, if *she* has no objection to stick to the boys' parts."

Tornorino's only reply was a request to be made acquainted with the gentleman's notion of a reasonable salary.

The amount named might, with economy, have sufficed to keep Patty in silk stockings and pumps; and although this, when communicated to the beauty, had appeared to her the very perfection of independence, her more experienced spouse knew better, and became quite aware of the disagreeable fact that he and his fair bride had still no resource to look to for their daily bread, but the well-guarded pocket-book of the major.

No wonder, therefore, that the gentle hint now given by that gentleman, signifying that if Patty chose to continue her public career, she must choose also to live by it, threw him into a state of agitation, which, for a moment, robbed him of all power of protesting against this terrible sentence.

But, while her terrified husband was struggling for breath, Patty was well enough disposed to answer in his stead.

"Pack up!" she exclaimed. "Capital notion that, Mr. Pap, for a first-rate actress, who is so much the fashion, as to be obliged to repeat the part with only two days' interval. Pack up, indeed! I shall just pack up when the rest of the ladies at the theatre do, and not one minute before, you may depend upon it."

"It is settled then, Patty," said the major, looking frowningly enough, between anger and sorrow. "No more need be said about it, so I wish you good night. We leave this place at five o'clock to-morrow morning, so I suppose there is no great chance of our meeting again."

"Then you are a fool for your pains, papa, and a bit of a brute too, I must say, not to stay and witness the success, and the fashion, and the fame of your only child. Much you must love me to be sure, mustn't you?"

The major felt at that moment that he did love her, notwithstanding all her saucy impertinence; and, feeling a little of the paternal vanity of which his fair daughter thought he ought to feel a great deal, he turned to his son-in-law, and said—

"Does she mean to tell me, Tornorino, that her playing was successful?"

"Santa Maria, no!" cried the Don, suddenly recovering his voice. "Dear sar, it was a capriccio of your beautiful daughter; to her I can refuse no ting—no ting in the whole world. And so I, like a fool bête, let her try. But it not do, sar, it not do at all. Dey offers her so little bit money as not keep her pretty beauty alive. We go pack, we go pack, this very moment, belle Pati."

"What an abominable sneak you are, Don!" cried Patty,

colouring through her theatrical rouge like scarlet. "I do despise you from the very bottom of my heart; and if I do pack up, it shall be just on purpose to leave you behind, so put that in your pipe and smoke it, you poor cowardly fellow, that's afraid of being scolded by papa. You don't deserve such a wife as I am, that you don't, and if I keep my present my mind, you shall never have me again. Smoke that too, Mr. Don."

"Hush, hush, Patty," said the major, "you are behaving a great deal worse than the Don, I promise you. It is lucky for you that he has come to his senses before we have left you to starve, which I give you my word and honour we should have done, if he had not been more reasonable than you are. Get away with you, foolish girl, do! You may kiss me if you will, and part friends, upon condition that you never take any such nonsense into your whirligig of a head again. If it was not for your mother's uncommon cleverness, we should have got into a terrible scrape, I promise you, and have found ourselves just five hundred dollars the poorer for your frolic."

"Make me believe that, if you can," cried the incorrigible Patty, turning away without giving the slightest indication of intending to grant the invited kiss. "I shall just go to bed, for I am as tired as a dog, and if my sneaking Don chooses to pack up he may, but I'd see him hanged ten times before I'd do it."

And with these tender words, very pointedly addressed to the chosen of her heart, the young beauty made her exit, brushing with an air of defiance by her mother, who, on her part, felt greatly too angry to speak without betraying more warmth than she thought it prudent to display, as she by no means wished to attract the attention of any of their quaker neighbours to their room at that particular moment.

Flattering himself that there was no immediate danger that he and his gentle helpmate should be thrust out from the snug shelter of the parental wing, the Don wisely abstained from any further display of deprecating eloquence, and followed his wife, bowing gracefully to "pap and mam" as he passed.

Both the major and his lady were, in every sense of the phrase, *wide awake* on the following morning at a very early hour, and while the gentleman sallied forth to secure the services of a porter to convey their luggage to the steamboat, the lady, notwithstanding her wrath, condescended to visit the apartment of her daughter to ascertain if she too, with her less guilty husband, were ready for departure. Instead of this, however, she found both the Don and his lady profoundly asleep, and even when she had removed this impediment to their activity, by shaking them both heartily, she had the mortification of hearing Patty declare, in her most contumacious tone, that whether it were early or late, she did not care a straw, and that she would have her sleep out if Old Nick himself came to shake her. It is probable that Mrs. Allen Barnaby might

have tried the effect of more effective measures still, had she not, at the very moment that her daughter thus expressed herself, fancied that she heard the door, inclosing the apartments of John and Rachel Williams, open. The possibility of their having heard of Patty's theatrical exhibition last night, and of their coming upon her for obtaining money under false pretences, as they now appeared under circumstances totally different from what they had represented, occurred to her with such force, that she instantly resolved to leave the house, wait for the return of her husband in the street, and make him escort her on board the steamboat before he removed their trunks, or paid any further attention to their contumacious daughter. The project could not, of course, be communicated either to the already snoring Patty, or her only half-awake husband; but, as she withdrew from the bed, she said, with sufficient emphasis to attract the attention of the drowsy Don—

"We are going to leave the house directly—but if you will stay in it you must."

She then left the room, and was on the pavement of the street in pursuit of the major, before her alarmed son-in-law had fully accomplished the difficult task of waking his wife. The look-out service of my heroine did not last long, for she had scarcely closed the house-door behind her before she saw the major approaching.

"The quakers are all on the alert this morning, and I have heard the door of the Williamses open and shut," she said, as soon as he was within reach of a safe whisper, for the black lad who followed him with a truck made any louder communication dangerous. "I have got the five hundred dollars in my pocket, Donny," she added, in the same cautious tone, "and *my* opinion is, that I and the dollars too, will be a great deal safer out of the house than in it."

"Egad! I am afraid so, upon my soul, if the Williamses are really stirring, for their movements are as regular as those of the clock on the staircase," returned the major, knitting his brows with a look of considerable anxiety. "A pretty business we shall have made of it, to be sure, if they have really found out this mad trick of Patty's, and choose to blow up a riot and expose us to the whole town. Not to mention the loss of the money, which of course we must give back if they choose to declare that we introduced ourselves under false colours, or we shall have the devil and all to do, with the police at our heels."

"I'll see every man, woman, and child of them, black, white, and yellow, slaves and free-borns, old and young, rich and poor, at the bottom of the sea before I'll give back a single farthing of the money," returned Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a degree of animation which would certainly have startled the black porter had he been within hearing; but the major had prudently ordered him to go on to the house, and wait in the hall till he came.

He, therefore, listened to this vehement reply without any feeling of displeasure or alarm, and even expressed his perfect approbation of the sentiments she expressed, adding, very gently, that he only feared her noble daring might eventually lead her into a scrape.

"Don't talk nonsense, Donny," was the prompt reply. "If I am once safely stowed on board the Lady Washington steamer I will bet my five hundred dollars to your gold snuffbox that I shall reach New York just as safely, my dear, as you reached Philadelphia. And if they were to lay hands upon me, what have they got to accuse me of, I should like to know? Have I not made over to them a legal claim to all the profits that shall accrue from my work? Have I manifested by word, act, or deed, the very slightest intention of swerving from my bargain?"

"All true, my dear. But why then do you feel it necessary to run away in such a hurry?"

"Merely to avoid the disagreeable necessity, if that gray tabby-cat, Rachel, *should* come and clutch me with her sly, velvet-like claws, and beg me civilly to return the money, because the Society of Friends don't approve acting people, of saying in reply I won't."

"True again, my Barnaby, you are a trump; and no one, whether king, queen, knave, or ace, need be ashamed to bow before you. You wish, then, to go on board instantly?" said the major.

"Yes," she replied, "instantly. It will look more respectable, you know, for you just to hand me on deck, and then you may be back in a moment, and see to the moving of everything. As to those silly fools, Patty and her husband, I believe they are still in bed, for I could not make them get up; but you must not wait for them, mind. Just give Tornorino money enough to come by the next boat."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby was politely handed on board without further loss of time by her observant husband, who immediately hurried back according to her instructions, and manfully assisted in removing his own and his lady's baggage from their room to the truck. As he mounted the stairs with his assistant black porter for the last load he encountered Ariadne, who was evidently moving down with a very eager step to find him. She bore in her hand a neat-looking little note, addressed to Mistress Allen Barnaby; and for an instant he was about to open it, the excellent terms on which he lived with his admirable wife fully justifying such a liberty. Yet had he done so he would most unquestionably have proved himself for ever unworthy of possessing such treasures as herself and her confidence; but happily a ray from her own spirit seemed suddenly to flash across him.

"Mrs. Allen Barnaby is gone," said he very composedly to the black help, "but I shall join her again very soon, and will take care to give her this note the moment I see her."

"But friend Rachel, and friend John too, wanted an answer immediately," said Ariadne; "massa best read it own self."

"That is never done in our country," replied the major, solemnly shaking his head, "and you may tell friend John and friend Rachel that I say so. But I will keep it for her very carefully."

And so saying, he demurely took out his pocket-book, and placed the note in one of its pockets. Ariadne, notwithstanding her freedom, could venture no further remonstrance, and returning with this answer to the apartment of the quakers, would probably have brought a second and a personal application from John Williams, had he not been still in bed. He instantly, however, began investing himself in such garments as were necessary for making his appearance, and nothing but the vigorous activity of the major prevented his having to undergo an interview which would certainly have been very far from agreeable. Most fortunately, however, upon his opening the door of Tornorino's room, in order to toss into it the dollars which his wife had desired him to leave with the offending young couple, he met the Don coming forth with his own portmanteau on his shoulder, and that of his wife dragging after him with his disengaged hand, while Patty herself, though looking as black as a thunder-cloud, followed behind him, bringing a huge carpet-bag.

"This fellow will help you," said the major, pointing to the grinning black porter. "I *cannot* stay an instant, and you had *better* not. Follow this black fellow and his truck to the wharf."

These words, which were spoken as the major descended the stairs, sufficed to frighten Patty a little, and her husband a good deal. Not a moment was lost. The remaining trunks were partly carried and partly kicked down stairs, the noble hands of the Don disdained not to assist in placing them on the truck, and the convoy was just under way as John Williams stepped forth from his own room-door upon the stairs. Had he not stepped back for his stick he must have overtaken it; but this delay gave time to turn the corner, and when he stepped forth into the street not a single living object was to be seen, save a very hungry-looking little cur, which at that moment was passing the steps, and which on seeing him trotted up them, looking piteously in his face.

"Poor beast! Thee art homeless!" said the kind-hearted man, stepping back into the hall, and calling to Ariadne, who was passing it, for "a plate of broken victuals for a poor dog."

He again looked up the street and down the street, for any passenger who might be able to tell him if he had met a party going to the steamboat with some luggage. But nobody was to be seen, the long and handsome street being vacant from end to end.

"And what matters it?" soliloquised the quaker, as he again retreated into the house. "I do believe that the whole set are not much better than they should be, but I would rather feed a hungry dog any day, than catch and scourge a vicious one. But my Rachel was right. There is no doubt about that."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE embarkation of the whole party, the lingering Tornorinos, and their baggage included, had very much the air of a regular escapade. All the men, women, and children around them, however, were too completely occupied by their own concerns to bestow any great attention upon those of others till the bustle was over, and the "Lady Washington" steamboat fairly under way.

As the steam hissed and the paddles played, Mrs. Allen Barnaby smiled, rejoicing with no common joy at being thus *quitte pour la peur* of an interview with her dear friend John Williams. His letter, however, was still unopened and still to be read, and the major gently hinted that it might, perhaps, be as well to look at it, just for the sake of civility, though of course, going at the rate they did, its contents could signify but little, as all that was at all important in the negotiation between them had been completed by her receiving the dollars, and there could be no danger of their being overtaken in time to undo it. However, the major and his lady retired to an unoccupied spot upon the deck, where, the letter being opened, and lovingly held between them, they read together the following words:—

"FRIEND BARNABY,—Thee hast not, it may be, intended to deceive us; but, whether intending it or not, thou hast done so. It may be that in thine eyes, and in those of thy people, the young men and women who minister to the pleasures of the worldly, by exhibiting themselves upon the stage, are in no way rendered unfit to associate with such persons as Rachel Williams; but it is not so with us. Neither should I, nor those who act with me, be well pleased to purchase the co-operation of a female, who permits her young daughter to appear clothed in man's attire before the eyes of our fellow-citizens. Wherefore, friend Barnaby, I do require of thee to restore unto me the money which I have unwarily put into thy hands, and be advised by me, for thy own good, to abstain henceforth from intermeddling or intermixing with the Society of Friends, for the which thy habits and opinions render thee in no way suitable. Thee mayest return the notes by the steady female who will deliver this into thy hands; or I will call upon thee to receive the same, as soon as thee shalt be stirring, and ready to see me.

"I remain thy friend,
"JOHN WILLIAMS."

The major looked down upon the merry upturned face of his wife with so comical a leer that it made her laugh outright, in

which gay humour he joined very cordially for a minute or two, and then, recovering his gravity, said, very demurely—

“Well, my dear, what do you wish to do about it?”

“Wish?” she replied in the same tone, “why, my dear, I wish he may get it.” To which piece of facetiousness she added, “and I wish, also, that the fishes may come in for their share of this very profitable transaction.”

And then, suiting the action to the word, she withdrew the letter from her husband’s hand, and, tearing it into very little bits, dropped it by sundry instalments into the waves, which their rapid movement caused to froth and foam as it hurried past them.

Their passage to New York was agreeable in every way. The weather was fine, the sea calm, the breakfasts, dinners, and suppers, abundant, and their spirits very considerably above par. Even Patty was in a good humour, notwithstanding her forced exit, for she was amusing herself by arranging lots of schemes for the future, by which she and her beautiful Don might emancipate themselves from the tyranny of the “old fogrums,” and return to what it was very evident must in the end secure them very large fortunes, as well as fun for everlasting. The terror into which the Don himself had been thrown, by what he perfectly well knew was a positive failure, rendered the sort of tacit forgiveness and restoration to favour which he had found at the hands of his august parents-in-law very like a return to paradise. His precious Patty had never yet known what it was to be hungry without having the means of satisfying the craving; but he had, and this made a very remarkable difference in the value they respectively set upon the paternal protection. However, he by this time knew his beloved too well to risk the harmony which at present existed between them, by venturing to hint at any such dull realities, and continued to listen to her plots and plans, her hopes and wishes, her intentions and resolves, with an approving smile that rendered anything like a dispute impossible.

At length the beautiful commercial metropolis of the western world was reached. The beams of the setting sun danced over the waves which, however sheltered from the winds, were for ever and ever agitated by the oars, the paddles, and the keels of ceaseless industry, and the whole scene was so animated, and so brilliant, that even the languid Tornorino exclaimed—

“N’est-ce pas beau, Patti!”

Our amiable and sociable travellers had, as usual, contrived to make acquaintance with some of their fellow-passengers, and by dint of answering all questions readily, and with a judicious mixture of admiration of the glorious country, and insinuations of their own high station in the humble little island from whence they came, their progress from the Battery to the most fashionable house in Broadway was marshalled by two members of congress and a senator, who all seemed anxious to testify their good-will towards strangers so every way respectable.

On reaching the boarding-house no questions were asked about recommendations; they entered with Mr. Crop, Mr. Griskin, and Mr. Fad. This was recommendation enough, for besides their legislative honours, Mr. Crop was a general merchant in an enormous way of business, Mr. Griskin a partner in seventeen banks in different towns of the Union, and Mr. Fad the editor of three newspapers, and nine other weekly or monthly periodicals, all of which he thought might benefit by intimate association with so liberal and well-informed a traveller as the major had already proved himself to be. A few words from each of the distinguished gentlemen, whispered in a little side parlour to the head of the establishment, were sufficient to procure for our wanderers the very best rooms vacant in the house, as well as every other boarding-house attention, calculated to make them feel, in the native phrase, "quite at home."

It was not, however, till the following day that my heroine and her daughter burst upon the large party domesticated at Broadway House in full splendour, and then they were immediately acknowledged by all the company as a pair of the most first-rate females that had appeared from the old country for a long spell. It was, indeed, a prodigious relief to Mrs. Allen Barnaby to find herself released from the Quaker restraint which she had submitted to at Philadelphia, and she certainly made the most of the opportunity now offered of showing off her "nice things," as well as her nice self. Patty was, as usual, exceedingly brilliant; and as no city of the known world sets a higher value upon fine dresses than New York, the result of this display was extremely satisfactory.

"A person *must* be somebody, to wear such a velvet and such lace as Mrs. Allen Barnaby," was the acute observation of one lady.

"And it was impossible a mere nobody could wear such rich satin as Madame Tornorino for a mere ordinary dinner-party at a boarding-house," said another.

The estimate formed of the major and his son-in-law was equally favourable; the former being pronounced to be about the best pattern of an Englishman that had been sent out; and the Don declared to be, especially by the ladies, a perfect model of a man, particularly as to his "*whiskers*."

The agreeable impressions thus produced by the appearance and manners of the strangers led to a proposition in favour of the major and the Don, which was by no means usual at an American boarding-table. Instead of dispersing here, there, and everywhere, as soon as the operation of eating was over, the gentlemen of the party gathered round the new comers, as the ladies left the room, and civilly proposed that they should take their cigars together, either with wine or spirits, as might be most agreeable to the "*Europians*."

The proposition was of course as amiably received as made; for no man ever saw Major Allen Barnaby decline so favourable an

opportunity of making himself acquainted with the statistics of any new region into which his eventful life might have led him. Whatever the major did on such occasions of course the Don did also; so that in a very few minutes after the table was cleared of the meats, and the room of the ladies, a knot of seven gentlemen were snugly drawn together at the upper part of the board, with spirits, sugar, water, wine, cigars, tobacco, and whatever else such a party were likely to require for the purpose of making themselves comfortable.

Now this was exceedingly frank and hospitable—that is to say, nationally, not individually, hospitable; for of course every man was to pay his own expenses on the occasion. But, as far as it went, it rather exceeded the usual bounds of civility manifested under similar circumstances. Every effect, however, has a cause, and so had this. Perhaps there is no city upon the earth to which, in proportion to its size, so great a number of speculative adventurers resort, as New York. Every man, therefore, who appears there, without introductions announcing his avowed and specific object, naturally becomes an object of curiosity if not of suspicion. If the stranger so arriving be evidently a poor man, his poverty acts as a wet blanket upon this curiosity, and he is left to himself; at any rate no more notice is taken of him than that manifested by the hundred and one questions as to who, what, whence, why, and whither, to which all new comers are naturally subjected in a country so desirous of general information as the United States. But where a party is seen to display so glittering an exterior as that exhibited by the Allen Barnaby race, the sensation produced is very considerable; and such a hospitable manœuvre as that above described, is likely enough to be resorted to, in order to elicit the real object of their crossing the Atlantic, besides that of looking at “the most glorious country under the sun.”

Major Allen Barnaby was not “that soft,” as the Yankees express it, to feel the slightest doubt as to the cause of the amiable eagerness with which his acquaintance appeared to be sought, and while in the very act of bowing his acquiescence to the agreeable proposal, he made up his mind to turn the cross-examination to account.

“Capital claret that, and capital whisky this,” said the beloved of our heroine, as he imbibed the first sip of the favourite mixture, by which a single glass of claret all round was followed. “What a glorious country this is, gentlemen! Cross the Atlantic to visit it! Upon my soul, though I am no longer so young as I was, I should think nothing of sailing a dozen times round the world in the regular Captain Cook style only to get a look at it.”

“We do count it a pretty considerable fine country, sir,” replied a senior member of the boarding-house mess; “and I must say that I expect the nation is gaining ground among the Europeans, for a precious sight of ’em steam over nowadays to give us

a look. But I dubiate, a good deal, Major Barnaby, sir, if they will any of them become sufficiently availed of the real original cause of our unequalled prosperity and advancement, to do much good in the old worn-out country when they get back again. It is not that easy to reform fundamantal mischief, sir, as a considerable number of your countrymen seem to suppose."

"Reform! sir," exclaimed Major Allen Barnaby, snapping his fingers; "I scorn the word. I scorn it as I am sure, gentlemen, that you must all scorn it in your hearts. What has it done for us? Nothing, absolutely nothing. It is not reform we want, it is revolution. Has our boasted reform brought us one inch nearer to the constitution of the United States of America? That is the question I ask, and let any one give a favourable answer if he can."

"Why for that matter," said one of the legislative gentlemen, in reply, "I expect you must still pocket the affront of being told that the government of England is as far behind the government of America, as your Virginia Water is to our Niagara. It don't do to talk of them together, sir. You'll excuse me, but it's no manner of use to draw a parallel. The superiority on our side is that much, as to make it not any way a civil subject of discourse between us."

"I appreciate your delicacy, sir," replied the major, with a deep sigh. "However, in my case," he added, "it is, I am happy to say, less necessary than in that of most other persons. For the fact is, I am determined to shake off the yoke."

Major Allen Barnaby would not have arrived at the age of fifty-five years with so much prosperity as we know he had done, if he had not possessed a considerable portion of that ready tact which enables a man, and a woman too, to discover if what they utter produces the effect they wish.

The major, on the present occasion, perceived in an instant, that a glance was sent round from eye to eye, that seemed to say, "What does that mean?" and with equal rapidity of thought, he recollected that many English subjects who had "thrown off the yoke," had done so not solely to enjoy the happiness of visiting the great republic, but because their little monarchy have given hints that it had had enough of them. But he corrected this trifling blunder admirably.

"Shake it off!" he said, with a deep sigh. "Alas! gentlemen, that is more easily said than done. To a man in my position I well know that the doing this effectually is impossible. I have large property in England, landed property, unfortunately, and unless I intend to turn beggar as well as republican, I cannot at once turn my back upon the country where it lies."

The glances were now accompanied by a satisfactory sort of little nod, that seemed to say, "All's right."

"That's an unhandsome predicament," said one of the members

of congress. "But at any rate, sir, before you go back again to your poor, tumble-down, old place, you may gratify yourself by listening to a little first-rate eloquence in congress, which is what not many of your nation is capable of enjoying, seeing that, naturally enough, as I think you will allow, we most times take the freedom of expressing our thoughts concerning the old country, and now and then we can't but see that if any English is present, they wince a little under the lash. However, with you, sir, as it seems, the case will be altogether different; for it is clear to see, you would not mind seeing the old lady, our great-grandmother, as the young folks call her, get a box in the ear."

"Not the least in the world, sir, I do assure you," replied Major Allen Barnaby, with a laugh. "You may knock her about exactly as much as you like, I promise you I shall never interfere to protect her."

The major then launched out on the theory of government, and exerted himself to the utmost to prove his entire conviction that the republican form was the only one to which any reasonable man would willingly submit himself; but a good deal to his surprise, he found that all his new acquaintance began to yawn, and display symptoms, more or less equivocal, of finding his conversation exceedingly tiresome.

Major Allen Barnaby was not a man easily induced to doubt his own powers when he chose to exert them, and yet he could not but suspect now that there must be some deficiency of warmth and vigour in his eloquence: and being exceeding anxious to inspire, if possible, a little of the ardent sort of admiration which had rewarded his lady's exertion in the south, he started off anew, taking the glorious and immortal Washington for his theme, and protesting that his code, and his only, was that to which regenerated Europe would henceforward be willing to submit herself. But again his audience yawned, and it is possible that the expression of his countenance was indicative of surprise, mortification, or both; for the gentleman who sat immediately opposite to him said, with a funny sort of smile—

"You must not take it ill, Major Barnaby, sir, if you don't find us New Yorkers overmuch given to reason about principles, and politics, and all that sort of thing; for to say the truth, there is not one of us cares a button about it, from first to last. You mentioned just now, sir, that you had made for New Orleans when you crossed. And there now, they will talk about principles, and the rights of ownership, and the natural difference between free-borns and slaves, from July to eternity; but the thing is quite different here. We don't care a cent about *principles*, having quite enough to do, looking after *principal*. Do you bite, sir? That's the reason why you do not find us altogether so much taken with your very good and esteemable notions as we otherwise might be. But perhaps, sir, you are not yourself at all in the mercantile line? and

in that case I expect you'll find that you are considerably thrown out among us."

"Not mercantile, my dear sir?" returned the major; "you are altogether mistaken in that supposition, I do assure you. Few men have speculated more largely or more variously than myself; and I am at this very moment looking out for a good opportunity of investing a tolerably large sum of money in any concern in this country that is satisfactorily established, and promises tolerably well."

People talk of the brilliant effect of a sudden burst of sunshine upon a landscape, and it is certainly very striking; but what is it when compared to that produced by this last sentence of Major Allen Barnaby? Every eye kindled; every head was brought forward; every ear seemed to erect itself; every nostril to expand, as if game were afoot, and each living creature there instantly straining upon the slips to pursue it.

The clever major saw that he had made a hit, and immediately assumed a quiet, meditative air, as if the subject touched him too nearly to permit its being lightly discussed. He no longer continued to be the principal speaker as before, but stirred his hot toddy, and appeared more inclined to hear than to be heard.

But there was no longer any danger that the conversation should flag. First, the gentleman next him on the right-hand began to open upon the subject of banks, by a leading observation muttered in his ear; and then the gentleman to the left said decisively, as he began mixing a second tumbler, "Part ownership in a good vessel well engaged and well manned, is out and out the best venture going;" while a third, from another point, hemmed aloud in order to command attention, and then pronounced with all the dignity of a lawgiver (which indeed he was), that there were shares now on sale in a canal that he could mention, a deal surer in the way of property than the Bank of England, and bringing a certain return of from twenty to thirty per cent. instead of three; adding, with an intelligent nod of the head, "I should be happy to talk with you a little, sir, on that subject, whenever you happen to be at leisure."

The major now, in an extremely short space of time, felt that he knew his company as well as if he had passed a year with them, and cleverly enough did he contrive to propitiate them all. Not a word they uttered seemed lost upon him; nay, if two or three of them spoke together, he still contrived by some grimace or other to make each one believe that *he* was the individual to whom, if the other gentleman would permit it, he most desired to listen.

All this answered very well, as far as it went, but it was rather dull work, too, for the major to go on talking for an hour together about dollars and dollars, and yet never once to hear the exhilarating words, bet or stake. However, he knew perfectly well that there were more ways than one by which a man of genius might

turn his wit to profit, and the sitting broke up at last with precisely the sort of speeches, about being happy to make his acquaintance, which he desired to receive. And make his acquaintance in some way or other, he was quite determined they should, though he felt that it would require rather more time than at New Orleans, to decide in what way it might be done with the best chance of conducing to the one great end he ever had in view.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MRS. ALLEN BARNABY, meanwhile, did not absolutely lose her time, for she talked to everybody who would listen to her, about her house in Curzon-street, and going to court, and holding something very like a court at home, and, in short, she did her own honours with the greatest possible perseverance and energy. Her success, however, if not altogether equivocal, was at best but various; the New York ladies, even those who occasionally take a "spell of boarding," are considerably "ahead" of such of their southern sisters as have not traversed the Atlantic; and though the velvets and satins did a good deal towards standing in the place of introductions, they did not do quite so much as she expected.

My observant heroine, too, now found the difference between addressing herself to a master passion and letting it alone. Had she presented as presents to her new companions some of her most precious and transferable articles of finery, instead of merely displaying them, it is possible that she might have advanced more rapidly in their good graces; inasmuch as it has been repeatedly asserted by analytical-minded travellers, that the master-passion of the majority of fair ones at New York is dress; but no such expedient suggested itself either to Mrs. Allen Barnaby or her daughter. The latter, indeed, had by no means permanently recovered her good humour, still considering herself as one of the most cruelly-treated specimens of human genius on record, and believing firmly, and hinting plainly, that nothing but her mother's jealous envy of the fame that awaited her, had caused her being thus violently withdrawn from the profession she had embraced with so much enthusiasm.

My heroine, on the contrary, with that fine buoyancy of spirits which ever distinguished her, suffered not herself to be depressed in the slightest degree by discovering that for the time being she was not likely to make any particular use or profit from the folks around her. Instead of yielding to any such useless and enervating weakness, she recapitulated clearly and distinctly in her well-trained and able mind, the various sources of solid profit which she

and her spouse between them had contrived to find on a soil rather more famed for acquiring money than for yielding it. The sum total of these successes was respectable in amount, and the time consumed by the acquirement of it, comparatively short; wherefore she very reasonably determined to make use of the unavoidable interval of exertion, which now seemed to have occurred, by enjoying herself without repining or regret.

The major, meanwhile, was more than usually silent as to the nature of his occupations, but gave her to understand every morning, when they separated after breakfast, that she would not see him again till they met at dinner; and in like manner, when the company left the dinner-table, he just found time to say, "Don't expect me till you see me, my dear," and no more. Night and morning, indeed, when in the retirement of their own apartment, the wife asked, and the husband answered, many questions. But though she questioned "with the boldness of a wife," and he answered with even more than the usual courtesy of a husband, the chief information given and received, consisted in the fact that he had as yet no intelligence to communicate sufficiently definite to make it worth while to talk about it.

"Then I suppose, major," she replied, "we may all amuse ourselves as we like, till you give orders for right-about wheel?"

"Exactly so, my charming wife," he answered, gaily. "I am just spying here, and peeping there, and listening everywhere, to find out if anything is to be made of these New Yorkers. If there is, I'll let you know, my dear; and maybe we'll draw up here, and take breath a little before we go any further. If not, we'll be off in double quick time, you may depend upon it."

"That is just as it should be, Donny," said she.

"I trust everything most implicitly to you," said he, "and feel no anxiety whatever, my dear, in leaving you entirely to yourself."

"Just tell me, Donny, will you," she rejoined, "how much do you pay a head for us here, by the week?"

"What makes you ask, my dear? Do you want to be economical, and go somewhere else in the hope of finding it cheaper?" said he.

"No, indeed, major," she replied, briskly; "I have no such stingy notions in my head, I promise you. Why should I? I am sure that altogether we have done most uncommonly well since we came here; and you know of old, that I am one of those who think money, like everything else, is just worth as much as it will bring. So don't fancy that I want to creep into a hole, and get half starved and half poisoned, in order to save a few dollars, while my purse is as full as it is just at present. That's not what I am thinking of; but I'll tell you what it is. As long as you go on engaged for everlasting, out of the house, I see no good reason why Patty and I should stay in it, if we can amuse ourselves better elsewhere; and

my belief is, that we might go to the springs at Saratoga just as cheap as staying here. As far as I am concerned, I am quite sure there's nothing to be got in the way of profit out of any of the people I am likely to make acquaintance with here, and not much, between you and I, in the way of amusement. So if you'll just shovel out as many dollars as would clear Patty, Tornorino, and me, for a fortnight in this house, we'll just bundle ourselves off to the Springs, Donny, and if we find anything going on there in your way, my dear, I'll take care to write and let you know."

"And a very good plan to, my Barnaby," replied the major, nodding his head approvingly. "I can't quite tell yet whether I shall screw anything, in any way, out of the queer chaps here. At any rate it won't be in the old way if I do, and so you may take Tornorino with you and welcome."

"That's all right then," replied my heroine, "for Madame Patty would never have been contented without him. But why, I should like to know," she added, with a coaxing sort of smile, "are you grown so monstrously mysterious, my dear? Whether you have any thoughts of standing for president, or whether you expect that you'll talk them into making you commander-in-chief of their army, if they happen to have one, I have no more notion than the child unborn. You never used to be so very, very cautious before, Donny."

"Upon my soul it is no caution, wife, but wholly and solely because I have nothing to tell you, that I tell you nothing. These chaps are the queerest folks you ever saw in your life, my Barnaby, there is no making out what they want to be at. From the moment I gave them to understand (which I did in a very easy off-hand sort of way) that I had ready money with me, they have been hanging about me like wasps round a honey-comb, and it is as clear as the sun at noonday that they both hope and expect to get something out of me; but I shall be surprised if they do. Shan't you, my dear?"

"I think I should be a little disappointed, Donny," replied his wife, with a pretty complimentary bow. "But it seems to me a sad loss of time, my dear, to stay here, just taking care of yourself, and nothing more. I confess," she added, "that I don't see, from what you now say, any very good reason why we should not all start together. There is always something going on, you know, at watering places, and whether it is little or much, it must be better than nothing, or than just watching to see which way these land sharks mean to set about grabbing at you, merely for the pleasure of disappointing them."

"Why yes, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, if that were quite all, I should be perfectly of your opinion," replied the major. "But I cannot help thinking that if they once fairly set about diddling me, as we call it, I should somehow or other be able to turn the tables on them."

"Well," she returned, "I dare say you know best, major, and therefore I most certainly shall not think of arguing the point with you. What say you then, my dear, to our giving notice to-day that we three mean to be gone when the current week is up?"

"Why, my dear," he replied, "I say that I think it is the best thing you can do."

The matter being thus amicably settled between them, the projected plan was put into execution without delay or difficulty of any kind, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with her daughter and son-in-law, set off for the springs of Saratoga, their European finery being recruited by some of the most striking articles that New York could furnish, and their spirits in that happy state of excitement which arises from the consciousness of having nothing but amusement as an occupation, and nothing but whim as a master.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AMONG the *gentlemen* who, on the first day of Major Allen Barnaby's dining at New York had pressed round him with civilities of all kinds, and offers of commercial aid and assistance in particular, in whatever speculation might attract his attention, there were two who stuck to him very much more closely than the rest. These two gentlemen, Mr. Crop and Mr. Fad, who had been amongst his earliest acquaintance on board the steamboat from Philadelphia, and who had paid a good deal of attention to the abundant baggage of the European travellers, had not only listened with very particular attention indeed to everything that had fallen from the free-spoken major concerning the ready money he had brought out with him, but had even contrived to discover completely to their satisfaction that it had not come in the questionable form of bills of credit, the very name of which is peculiarly disagreeable to American ears, but *bonâ fide* in specie, convertible at five minutes' notice into the dollars upon which their heart doted. The major was fully aware of the peculiar pertinacity of these attractions, and was quite as much awake to the fact of their having some particular object in view in bestowing them, as they could possibly be themselves. But far from experiencing any jealous suspicions concerning their motives, or any feeling of alarm lest any of the much celebrated Yankee tricks should be played off against him, he wished for nothing so much as a fair trial of skill. He knew that it would not be made in the same style, or with the same weapons to which he had hitherto been the most accustomed; but, either from natural generosity of temper, or a noble confidence in his own innate strength, which he knew would render him a

match for most men, let them attack him in what manner they would, either from one or both of these considerations, he waited with no small degree of impatience for the opening of the campaign. It will be seen, therefore, that his statement to his wife was in every respect the most candid and sincere possible, and that he really told her nothing, solely because he had nothing to tell. Hitherto he had waited with great patience for some hint of their hopes or wishes, and he was fully determined to wait with equally great patience for some time longer, although it is certain that, either from family attachment, a love of change, or the pleasant thoughts suggested by the idea of a watering-place, he did not see the gay-looking trio set off without feeling a very considerable inclination to accompany them. Still, however, he went on for three days longer drinking toddy and smoking cigars with Messrs. Crop and Fad, without committing himself by any initiative movement, and still the conversation at each sitting began and ended by general declarations on the part of the native gentlemen, that capital, if properly applied by those who know how to make the most of it, might just now be turned to tarnation good account; and by responses on that of the foreigner, that he held the funds he had brought with him quite ready for any investment that promised a profitable return, but that of course he should look for good security.

How long this sort of coquetting might have gone on, had nothing occurred to quicken the movements on either side, it is impossible to say, but the following letter spurred the sides of the major's intent so effectually, as to set the machinery he had to deal with, very speedily in motion:—

“MY DEAR MAJOR,—This place is glorious, and unless you soon tell me of some very brilliant and successful *coup de main* performed at New York, I shall continue to think, as I do at present, that you are losing your time there most abominably. The springs, they say, were never so full. It was as much as ever we could do to get two decent bedrooms, and I can't boast much of their cheapness; however, that would not signify, you know, if you were here, Donny, exerting yourself a little. And that you might do, early and late, I can tell you, for I hear the billiard-balls clicking the very first thing when I open my window in the morning, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, they go on all night. Nor is that by any means all that is going on here, I promise you. We have got as thorough-going a set of card-players as ever I saw, that are always left hard at it in the great saloon, when all the rest of the company go to bed. I can't, of course, pretend exactly to say what the stakes are, but instead of their nasty silver money, I observe they write on bits of paper and give one another, and I know, of old, that you always count that a good sign. Now does not all this make you long, my dear Donny, to reunite yourself to your beloved

family? However, I won't plague you about coming, if you think it wisest to stay where you are, for I not only give you credit for being as attentive and thoughtful in all matters of this kind as it is possible for a man to be, but I am also modest enough to believe, that you are likely to know best whether you ought to come here, or whether you ought not.

"As to Patty, she grows handsomer and more dashing and elegant in her style and manner every day. It is a thousand pities, to be sure, that she should be tied up to that Lackpenny Tornorino, for I do think she might have had the pick of the market, go where she would. However, what can't be cured must be endured. Our nice things in the way of dress are a great help to us, I can see that plainly. Such peeping and peering at our French collars and lace. Tornorino, too, looks exceedingly well, always dressed to the life, I promise you, and I can't but say, in excuse for Miss Patty, that he looks quite the man of fashion; so that altogether our party is not to be sneezed at, and I must say that, take us one and all, I think we are the most stylish set here. This can't but be an advantage to you, Donny, if you should take it into your head to come before the season is over. But now I must say good-by, for Patty is storming at me with her beautiful pink feathers all flying about like wild, as she tosses her handsome head, because I am not ready to set off for the public walk. Once more I say, come if you can; and always, dear Donny, here, there, and everywhere, believe me to be your affectionate wife,

"MARTHA ALLEN BARNABY."

This letter immediately decided the major to bring matters to the point between him and his dear friends, Messrs. Crop and Fad, if, indeed, they ever meant to come to the point at all; but at any rate he was determined to lose no more time, and if on that very afternoon he failed to discover a good chance of doing something at New York, to set off as early as possible for Saratoga.

On that very afternoon, therefore, he placed himself, as usual, opposite his new friends, as soon as the dinner-party had dispersed, and stirring his toddy very assiduously, said—

"Well, gentlemen, I think I must be off to the springs after my wife and family, for I really have been making all the inquiries I can about an investment for these few troublesome thousands, that I was foolish enough to bring out with me, and I can hear of nothing that would at all suit my views. Your enterprises and speculations here are all upon so large a scale, that five or six thousand pounds is like a drop of water in the ocean; so I have made up my mind to think no more about it; and after seeing Niagara and Boston, I mean to turn my face back again towards Europe, and content myself with some little speculation there."

Mr. Crop and Mr. Fad exchanged glances, and for a moment both of them remained silent; but at length, Mr. Crop, who was

by far the livelier genius of the two, suddenly addressed his friend Fad in an easy and natural tone, which gave to his words the appearance of being perfectly unpremeditated.

"That would be a pity, I expect, wouldn't it, Fad? I, for one, should be right down sorry to see good solid capital marched out of such a country as this, where it would be sure to bring a good ten or fifteen per cent. if it was made the most of."

"I expect it would," answered Fad, shaking his head, and looking quite sorry.

"Think again, Major Allen Barnaby, sir," resumed Crop, "and in the course of to-morrow morning, I calculate I might hit upon something or other quite in the ready money line of business that might suit. I could have done it before, easy enough, I make no doubt, only, truth to speak, I didn't know you were so much in earnest, or at any rate so much in a hurry."

"Why, after all, you know, Mr. Crop," said the major, smiling, "that the disposition of a few thousands is not likely to be an object of very first-rate importance to me, and that as my family all seem exceedingly well pleased at the springs, it is natural enough that I should feel well disposed to join them. However, I have not the least objection to wait over to-morrow, but if you do not in the course of the forenoon favour me with some sort of information a little more definite than any which you have hitherto given me, I really do not think you can blame me for leaving the city, without giving any further thought to the chances of finding a favourable investment here."

"No, sir, no blame whatever. In course you will be after doing in that respect whatever may happen to be most agreeable to yourself," said Mr. Crop, with great civility, and then added, "At present, to be sure, we only seem to be talking for talking's sake, that I must confess. What say you, Fad, to look in at the Bowery?" he added with an air of indifference.

This proposition seemed to be well relished by Mr. Fad, and the two gentlemen departed together, leaving the major to amuse himself again, as he had repeatedly done before since his arrival, by getting a little picking at chicken-billiards at some of the (comparatively speaking) harmless tables of the commercial city.

"Well, Fad," said his friend Crop, as arm in arm they sauntered off together, "I really think you must consent to expedite matters a little. I expect, my fine fellow, that it can make no great difference to you whether you are declared bankrupt two months hence or six?"

"I expect not much," replied Fad, gaily. "The fact is, that I have a notion my lady is dubitating whether she shan't take a house and give a ball, and I was calculating, you see, that it might be more profitable to give it before than after, on account of clearing off expenses."

"Why so it might, I expect, a trifle; but nothing comparable

to what we should both lose if we should suffer this chap to escape," replied Mr. Crop; "and as to time, though I would be the last man in the world to vex dear Mrs. Fad by disappointing her about her ball, the whole business will take so little time to get through, that I don't consider it will signify a cent to her, one way or the other. The smash will be over, and you up again, and as good a man as ever, before the winter season is over."

"Oh dear, yes, I know that perfectly well," replied Fad; "I am that much used to it, like the most of us, that I don't mind it the value of that," snapping his fingers, "and, therefore, I'm your man, either for drawing or backing, or anything you like."

"That will do, then," replied Crop; "if you are ready, the job is, and I won't say but what I shall enjoy it, for it's plain to see that this gay London officer fancies himself a devilish deal sharper than anybody as he is likely to meet with here. The very fact of his bringing his money out here to speculate with proves that fact. Don't you see, Fad? If he did not think us that soft that he could take some advantage or other of us, d'ye think he would have taken the trouble to steam out here for the sake of investing his thousands? Not he, take my word for it. He thinks to do us, Mr. Fad, and we'll just see, once and away, if we can't do him."

"Oh! but you forget, Crop," rejoined Fad, with a roguish sort of wink, "you forget the gentleman's political principles. Don't you know that he is come out here out of pure love for our constitution?"

"All that's very well when there's no money in the case, Mr. Washington Fad," replied the candid republican; "but the moment a man mixes up any question of money with his politics, I know, and so we do all, I expect, pretty considerably well on this side of the Atlantic, which is the substance and which is the shadow."

"You may say that, Mr. Jefferson Crop," returned his friend, laughing; "but by the Stars and the Stripes, you must not waste any more time in being witty, for if I am to put things in train, to declare myself bankrupt in two months, I must be tarnation active to-day, to-morrow, and the day after, I calculate, and therefore I must begin by begging you to go over the whole transaction, as it is to be done and performed for our mutual profit and advantage."

"I have got it all as clear in my head as rock crystal," said Mr. Crop, "and I expect he'll do his part of it as gentle as a lamb. At our next meeting I'll tell him that you have got an unaccountable good opportunity of buying your wife's brother's share of a fine property in Ohio, but that for a few months you must borrow a few thousand dollars, for which you are willing to give good interest."

"Why you don't mean to come upon him smack with a proposal to borrow his money, do you?" said Fad, shaking his head; "that will never do."

"I expect not, Mr. Fad. I should like to know whereabouts you think I was hatched? However, here we are at the Bowery—I'll explain it all when we come out. Our path is as straight before us as the Broadway."

With these words Mr. Crop pushed open the spring-doors of the theatre, and entered followed by his friend.

On the following morning Major Allen Barnaby had the pleasure of finding his new friend, Mr. Crop, better than his word, for instead of keeping him waiting till noon for the intelligence he had only half promised to obtain for him, he took him aside when they met at breakfast, for the purpose of saying that he had now got an opportunity, in a little way, of showing him what sort of interest might be obtained for money at New York, by those who thought it worth their while to look about for it; and then he proposed a walk on the Battery, to give them a leisurely and quiet interval for explanation. Major Allen Barnaby readily agreed to accompany him, and they set off together, Mr. Fad excusing himself from joining the party on account of business elsewhere.

"You must not fancy, sir," said the American, as soon as they found themselves on one of the quiet walks of the beautiful promenade they had sought, "you must not fancy, major, that I have been lucky enough to hit upon any grand and great speculation for you—no such thing. That would require a little more time than you have allowed me, I expect. But I shall just be able to show you, that I have not been talking of what I did not understand when I spoke to you of the rate of interest in New York. Without disbursing a single cent of your capital, you may get at the rate of twenty per cent. for only accepting a bill of Fad's. I'll let him have the money with all the pleasure in life, for I know my man, and instead of ten thousand dollars, I'd be happy and proud to lend him fifty thousand. But one does not get such a chance as that in a hurry. Fad wants the money all on a hop, you see, to purchase his wife's brother's share of a fine property in Ohio, that must be sold by auction out and out, directly, because the father, you see, is dead. Upon these ten thousand dollars, you and I shall make a pretty trifle each by dividing the interest, though it's only for a few months. But that's the way we do business in New York. What do you say to it, Major Allen Barnaby?"

"Why, I cannot but feel greatly obliged to you, sir, for letting me share this profitable trifle with you," replied the major. "But if you know Mr. Fad so well, as being himself a perfectly responsible person, why should you require an endorsement?"

"As far as I'm concerned," returned Crop, "I would not give a single levy for it. But it is the custom, you know. The fact is, that the monied men of New York have made it a sort of law, expressly for the purpose of turning a few thousand dollars in the year by just signing their names."

"Ay, ay, I see, I understand," said the major, looking perfectly

satisfied, "and I shall be quite ready to give my name for the consideration you mention—which I presume is paid in advance."

"Certainly, major, it is always paid in advance," said Crop. "But you must see Fad, of course, and settle all about it with him; and perhaps when the bill is drawn and endorsed, you may as well hand it over to me at my counting-house yourself, for the interest is a little sharpish even for New York, and I see no good to any of us in putting the transaction before the eyes of anybody but the parties concerned. I'll tell Fad that you will be with him in an hour, shall I?"

"If you please, sir; I will not fail to be punctual," returned the major; and after receiving a card with Mr. Fad's commercial address, he returned to the boarding-house and employed himself upon some little jobs that he had to do in his own room till it was time to set off again to keep his appointment.

When Major Allen Barnaby reached the counting-house of Mr. Fad, he found that gentleman seated there alone in the enjoyment of a solitary cigar, with a considerable mass of papers, ledgers, and account-books, ranged on the table before him.

"Your servant, Major Allen Barnaby," he said, as the gentleman entered. "You are punctual, sir, and that's the very soul of business. I often say that I have made as much money by my punctuality, as by my knowledge of business, and that is setting my value for it considerable high, I expect. Pray be seated, sir."

The major accepted the invitation, and immediately entered upon the business that brought him there, observing that their friend Mr. Crop had promised to be ready at his own counting-house to complete the transaction forthwith.

"I know he will," returned Fad. "Crop is one of the best fellows that ever lived; he knows that it is an object with me to be ready to step in with my money immediately, as there is a chance that I may lose the bargain if I don't, and I should reckon *that* a good three thousand out of my pocket, considering the pretty bit of property that I have got next lot to it. And now, sir, here is pen and paper all ready—shall I draw and you accept? or you draw and I back it?"

"I'll draw it, if you will," replied the major, carelessly.

The materials for doing so were placed before him and he began to write.

"I can't say much in praise of your pens, Mr. Fad," he said, first trying one and then another of those that stood in the ink-stand before him. "Perhaps, sir," he added, "you would be kind enough to give a touch to one of them with your penknife? We Englishmen, Mr. Fad, are natty about our pens, and I confess I like to write my name legibly, whether for ten thousand dollars or ten thousand pounds."

Mr. Fad instantly started up and retreated with a quill to the window, saying—

"If you are natty in using pens, Major Allen Barnaby, we count ourselves natty in making them. If you'll wait one minute, sir, you shall have one fit to imitate copper-plate." And he set himself assiduously to the task of turning a goose-quill into a pen.

"Don't trouble yourself, Mr. Fad," said the major, when the pen was about half made, "I have found one that will do exceedingly well. Now then, sir, have the kindness to endorse it without losing time, for I have promised Mr. Griskin to cross to Hoboken with him before dinner, and it is as much as I shall be able to do to bring the money to you here, and then get to the ferry by the time we agreed upon."

"I will not detain you an instant, my dear sir," cried Mr. Fad, hastening back to the table, where the major, who had completed his part of the business, was employed in carefully pressing the bill on a sheet of blotting-paper, holding in his hand another morsel of the same material in readiness for the endorsement, that no time might be lost, yet no danger of blotting ensue.

"You will be here, Mr. Fad?" said the major, carefully folding up the bill, and placing it in his pocket-book. "I must beg that you won't go till I return, for I shall by no means choose to cross the ferry with all this money about me."

"I think I told you, my dear sir, that I could not leave the office till my clerk came back. You may depend upon finding me."

Having received this assurance, our friend posted off with all speed to the counting-house of his other new acquaintance, whom he found sitting alone, much in the same style as he had found Mr. Fad. After being again complimented on his punctuality, the major said—

"I suppose you and Mr. Fad understand one another, sir, and therefore I have drawn this bill here according to his instructions, though the sum is double what you named to me."

The first words of this speech caused Mr. Crop to start, slightly, but the conclusion not only chased the feeling of alarm to which the opening had given rise, but produced a well-pleased though involuntary smile, which spoke, as plainly as a smile could speak, that the alteration mentioned was anything rather than disagreeable.

Neither the start nor the smile were lost upon the observant major, and he, too, would have smiled in his turn had he not thought it more advisable to look grave.

"There, sir," he added, laying down a bill drawn by him on Mr. Fad for twenty thousand dollars, and bearing that honourable gentleman's acceptance on the back of it.

"There, sir, is the bill, according to the request of your friend, for twenty thousand dollars instead of ten, an increased accommodation to him, to which, he said, you had agreed."

"Quite right, sir—quite true," replied Mr. Crop, applying

himself as he spoke to an iron strong box, which stood ready on the table; "I told him, as I believe I told you, that I should not have the slightest objection to advance him fifty thousand if he wanted it. I won't say," he continued, "but what I should have tried to make a better bargain for my friend Fad if I had known in the first instance, when I opened the business to you, that the sum would have been so large. It's getting a pretty sum considerable easy, I expect, Major Allen Barnaby."

"Very true, sir," replied the major, rather drily; "had it been otherwise, I certainly should not have accepted the proposal at all, for I detest trouble."

While this was passing, Mr. Crop continued drawing a heap of dirty American bank paper from his strong box till the sum of twenty thousand dollars was laid before Major Allen Barnaby, who presented the bill to Mr. Crop in return for it, and then took his leave, saying, "I have promised Mr. Fad to return with the money instantly, so I must wish you good morning."

"Good morning, sir, good morning," returned the civil Mr. Crop, attending him politely to the door; and so parted those two bright specimens of the old world and the new. But in this instance, at least, if in no other, the Englishman proved by far the most accomplished knave of the two, at least if success be taken in proof of superiority; for the well-timed bankruptcy of the excellent Mr. Fad, which was, of course, to throw the whole responsibility on our friend, had no more power to prevent the flitting of the active major than it had to prevent his drawing twenty thousand dollars instead of ten. In short, the Englishman proved himself the harder and sharper diamond of the two.

The major kept his promise very punctually to the eagerly-expectant Mr. Fad, paying over to him ten thousand dollars of the sum he had received, but, changing his mind as to his project of visiting the pleasant shades of Hoboken, he immediately returned to the boarding-house, accompanied by a porter, to whose truck he consigned all the remaining baggage of the party, having taken care, before he made his last exit, to leave it all in a state ready for removal.

But let it not be supposed for a moment that Major Allen Barnaby meant to make a clandestine escape from his quarters; on the contrary, he took the most handsome and honourable leave possible of the master of the establishment, paying him rather more than a week in advance, and expressing the most flattering regret at being thus suddenly obliged to leave a residence he had so greatly enjoyed, and a city he had so greatly admired, in consequence of a letter just received from his daughter, announcing the painful intelligence that his beloved wife had been suddenly taken ill and wished him to rejoin her instantly.

Mr. Perring, of the boarding-house, received both the dollars and the farewell with great politeness, and in less than a quarter

of an hour afterwards, the major, his trunks, and his pocket-book, were on board the *Atalanta* steamboat, bound to Albany, to which place he very audibly told the porter he was going in the hearing of one white and one black domestic at the boarding-house.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

To Albany, however, Major Allen Barnaby had no more intention of going than to Jericho. Instead of committing any such folly, he very deliberately went on shore at the spot from whence he could most conveniently reach the Springs which his amiable family honoured with their presence, and arriving there late in the evening, spent the interval between that hour and morning in getting his party ready to set off. Nobody, however, who had seen him figuring away at the supper-table as a first-rate European man of fashion, would have guessed the real state of the case. Nobody would have fancied, that, unless he had contrived to take himself off faster than the dear friends he had left could follow him, he would, in all human probability, have been exposed to a very disagreeable explanation. He was in high spirits, charmingly affectionate in manner to the dear creatures he had rejoined, and altogether so extremely agreeable, that the party at the *table d'hôte* very much regretted to find that his stay was to be so vexatiously short.

Before the company retired to their respective apartments for the night, Major Allen Barnaby took his son-in-law aside, and inviting him to a moonlight promenade in the front of the hotel, made him by a few words comprehend the nature of the circumstances which rendered an immediate ramble westward desirable. The Don showed no want of quickness in his manner of receiving this intelligence, and promised, with a greater appearance of courage than was quite usual with him, that he would take care his Pati should be ready.

This point settled, the gentlemen returned to the house, and soon afterwards my heroine and her spouse were *tête-à-tête* together.

It was the lady who spoke first.

"What in the world does all this mean, major?" said she, looking a little as if she intended to be out of temper. "I should like to know, if you please, what reason you can possibly have for insisting upon paying everything to-night, just as if we had not another hour to stay here?"

"You have several hours more to stay here, my dear, and I hope you will pass some of them in sleeping soundly. But my reason

for wishing to pay everything here, honestly, to-night is, that I mean to go away very early to-morrow morning."

"Good heavens! how tiresome you are," exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with a flash of the eye that showed her to be very heartily provoked. "Just as we have got acquainted with ever so many agreeable people, and made ourselves perfectly comfortable, you come down upon us with your tyrannical '*I must*,' which just means '*I will*,' and *presto*, everything must be packed up in a moment, and off we must go, just as if Patty, and I, and Tornorino, were so many blind puppies that you amused yourself by carrying about with you in a hamper."

"Blind, my dearest love!" exclaimed the major; "you really wrong me very much; nothing I can assure you can be further from my inclination than even leaving you in the dark for an hour, and much less, my Barnaby, would I have you blind. Listen to me for a very few minutes, fair wife, and I will shed light enough upon the business to make you see just as clearly as I do myself."

"Some more of your pretty gambling exploits, I'll be bound for it," exclaimed the lady, with a very ominous frown.

"Not so, my love," he replied, with great gentleness; "I really have not had the good fortune of being able to win as much money by gambling since you left me as would excite suspicion in a lynx. But if you expect, my beloved Barnaby, that I am to make ten thousand dollars in half an hour, by any manœuvre to which I should choose to invite all New York to be present while it is performed, and that, moreover, I should stand to be cross-examined by them afterwards, if you expect this, my charming wife, you over-rate my abilities."

"Ten thousand dollars!!!" exclaimed my heroine, with eyes and hands raised towards the ceiling. "Ten thousand dollars! What are you talking about?"

"I am talking, my dear, of the sum which I last inserted within the leather folds of my pocket-book," replied the major, demurely. "The which sum, although in very dirty American bank-notes, I would willingly submit to your ocular examination, my dear, were it not that I feel the moments to be rather precious, and that I am aware you must have a good deal to do in order to be ready to start by the stage at five o'clock to-morrow morning."

"You don't mean to say that you have really done some of those smoking fellows out of ten thousand dollars, and then set off exactly in the way they would be sure to follow? Oh, major! major! we shall be caught at last! How could you be so mad as to come here?"

"Chiefly, my dear, because I was quite sure that it was the very last place that they would *calculate* I should be likely to come to. And secondly, because I wished to have the honour and happiness of attending you and our charming daughter on the pleasant little

circuitous tour, which I intend making westward through this glorious and unequalled country."

"I do believe you are mad, major," said his lady, looking a good deal mystified, and rather uncomfortable. "If I did not know by experience, that drink what you will, you never get really tipsy, I should certainly think you were so now."

"Then you would be greatly mistaken, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," he replied. "I confess this little adventure has put me in good spirits, and makes me appear, perhaps, rather more frolicsome than ordinary, but you may trust me, my dear, my vivacity shall not bring you into any scrape whatever, nor myself either. So set about packing up, and there's a good woman, and then we will contrive to get a little sleep, if we can."

"And Patty?" exclaimed my heroine, suddenly stopping in the midst of the obedient bustle into which she had thrown herself amongst her bags and boxes; "how on earth are we to get her out of bed by five o'clock in the morning? to say nothing at all of getting her luggage ready! Shall I go to her, major, and try to frighten her into obedience?"

"Go on with what you are about, my dear," replied her husband, very composedly, endeavouring, as he spoke, to assist in some of the needful packing operations; "I have taken care of that. Tornorino knows all about it, and he has engaged for their both being ready, and their trunks too."

"But, major," again exclaimed his wife, and again suspending her activity while she asked the question, "how is it possible you can be so perfectly at ease as you seem to be, when you have come off with such a sum as that? What in the world should prevent their setting off after you? Hush! what noise is that? Mercy on me! What a scene it would make if they were actually to follow you in here, like a felon and a thief, and carry you to gaol before my eyes!"

"Don't torment yourself by any such fancies, my dear," he replied. "Take care how you put in that beautiful velvet. That's the dress that you look the best in, and of course I have a particular value for it."

"But, major," persisted his wife, after giving to the precious robe all the care it demanded, "what would become of us if these people should follow you here, and actually get you put in prison?"

Seeing, at length, that these anxious doubts and fears did very seriously impede the packing process, the major condescended to calm his lady's tender anxieties by saying—

"Be contented, wife, when I tell you that there is no law in the land that can trouble me for the next two months, and I must truly be in every way unworthy the happiness of possessing you for my wife, were I fool enough not to get out of their way by that time."

The major was out of luck. This last speech seemed likely to put a stop to the packing altogether.

"If you really have two months clear before you, major," said his wife, "why should we be kept out of our natural rest in this way? I'll be hanged if I don't get to bed this moment, if that is the case. Two months! Why, leave the country at which end you will, it won't take two months to get on board."

The major now began to look as if he would not like all this much longer.

"Mrs. Allen Barnaby," said he, "you may remain up or go to bed, whichever you happen to like best: and, moreover, you may pack, or not pack, as it may happen to please you. Moreover, such is my respect for your will, that if you do not like to accompany me on my projected travels, you have my unconditional consent to stay where you are. But I leave this place at five o'clock to-morrow morning."

The lady, on hearing these words, renewed her labours, and as she did so without any further remonstrance, the amiable major at last took pity upon her curiosity, and explained, pretty tolerably at full length, the whole transaction that has been related above. It was, to say the least of it, very injudicious to attempt keeping so right thinking a woman as Mrs. Allen Barnaby in the dark, even for an hour, for the instant the matter was properly laid before her, she at once displayed all the admirable powers of her able mind, and looked upon the whole transaction with the calmly philosophic eye of wisdom.

"I thank you, major," she said, "I thank you sincerely for having at length made me understand the nature of this transaction. As a jest played off to avenge, as it were, the numberless tricks which we hear of as practised against our countrymen it is more than justifiable; and in that light, my dearest major, it commands my warmest and most patriotic admiration. As a trial of skill, too, it is admirable, truly admirable! You know my principles, my dearest husband, and how very highly in the rank of virtues I class every effort that is made by human beings from motives of family affection, and a wish to benefit those whom nature has made dependent upon us. This consideration, as you will easily believe, prevents my judging too harshly of the little artifice which so cleverly doubled the sum of which it was the purpose of those stupid men to defraud you. It was masterly, Donny! But I will not delay a moment longer. Never, oh! never, may I be an impediment to the exertions of a man who so nobly, so bravely perils himself, for the good of his family!"

Having pronounced these words with every demonstration of deep feeling, Mrs. Allen Barnaby addressed herself once more to her packing. Yet once more she quitted it;—it was but for a moment;—but running to where the major stood in the act of closing a well-crammed portmanteau, she threw her arms round

his neck and tenderly kissed him, exclaiming as she returned to her employment—

“Excuse me, dearest Donny, but my heart was full to overflowing! You are a noble creature, and not to love you is impossible!”

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At the hour appointed on the following morning the major and his lady, the Don and his, together with all their travelling appendages, were safely stowed in a stage that was journeying westward, and there, for the present, we must leave them.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

NOTHING could exceed the pleasant hilarity of Major Allen Barnaby's spirits, when he found himself once more on board a steamboat, careering westward on the bosom of Lake Erie, at the rate of twelve knots an hour, his pocket-book crammed with bank-notes, and nobody whom he had left behind him having any more right or reason to guess whither he was bound, than he had to guess which way the wind would be likely to blow on the morrow. And how should they, since he did not know himself? His lady, who had been informed with the most perfect conjugal confidence of the real state of his finances, was under the influence of the same delightful harmony of spirits as himself; and though the Don and Patty were by no means admitted to the inmost recesses of the precious source from whence all this felicity sprung, they both of them had sufficient acuteness to feel quite sure that all was going right in the money department, and that such being the case, they would be likely, sooner or later, to come in for their share of the joke also.

“They may be as secret as they will, Tornorino,” said Patty, as she watched her father and mother laughing vehemently on the further side of the deck; “but if I don't get some of the cream of the jest, and that's the money, never trust me more. And I'll tell you what, my Don,” she continued, creeping very close to him, “never let you or I say another word to either of them about our acting. As to papa, he is a doting old fool, and has worked himself into a desperate fright for fear I should leave him, that's the English of his objections; but as for mamma, I can see as far into a mill-stone as she can, maybe, and all the fuss she makes about it, is just from jealousy and nothing else. I do think she is the vainest old soul that ever walked the earth; and the notion of my going to be stared at, and admired, where she can never hope for leave

to show her old face, is altogether more than she can bear ; and so there now, the murder's out, as far as she is concerned."

"Mais c'est bête, mais bête," exclaimed Tornorino ; "for de old lady to hope herself belle comme sa fille !"

"That's all right and true," returned his clever wife, who besides having made great progress in various other branches of human learning, was beginning to understand very tolerably her husband's composite language. "But we must manage, my dear, to do something more than just to find out that de old lady is a goose, we must find out also how to feather her gay gosling's nest. And this must be the scheme, darling. Whenever papa is in the sort of humour we see him now, we must coax and coax, till we get something out of him, and by degrees, if we save it all up, we may be able to hoard enough for a frolic, as the folks here would call it, and then be off, my darling ; see if we won't, and they may just wait till we want a little more before they get another chance of seeing our two handsome faces again."

Whether the accomplished Tornorino exactly agreed with his lovely lady in this view of what would be wisest for the future, it is impossible to say, because he cautiously avoided expressing any opinion on the subject, and confined his answer to a fond caress, which was, at least, as far removed from expressing contradiction as acquiescence ; but the pretty Patty was perfectly satisfied, and insisted not on any further explanation, but presently proposed that they should join their gay parents, in order to begin the coaxing process with as little delay as possible.

"How I do love to see you laugh, my own dear papa," said Patty, passing her arm within that of her father as he leaned over the side of the ship. "May I ask what it is about ? You know, pap, that I love to laugh too."

"It was just about nothing at all, Patty ; or, at any rate, the joke was one that you would not understand, for it had something to do with business, and I am sure you know nothing about that, do you, darling ?" said her loving father.

"Why I know this much, papa," replied the fond daughter, looking lovingly up in his face, "I know that when people look so monstrously pleased when they are talking about business, it is a sure sign that they have been making money by it. What do you say to that, pap ? Don't you think I am right ?"

"You are so far right, Patty, that nobody, I suspect, would be very likely to be found laughing when they were discussing business by which they had *lost* money," replied the major, demurely.

"True as true, darling pap !" rejoined his daughter, looking very intelligent ; "but my wit goes a little further than that, for I suspect that when people laugh so very heartily, they must have done something more clever than merely not losing."

"Well, Mrs. Don," replied the major, pinching her cheek, "you

may suspect what you like, you look too handsome to be quarrelled with."

"Do I?" she cried, clapping her hands joyfully; "then I know that you can't, for your life, refuse to give one little tiny twenty dollars to buy me a new cloak and bonnet. Can you, pap? Can you refuse your own poor Patty, who has not a single cent in the wide world that she can call her own? Think of that, pap! Is it not shocking? And I your only child, too!"

"I doubt very much your wanting either bonnet or cloak, Patty," said her father, shaking his head at her; "however, I have no objection now and then, as you pretty well know, to make a fool of myself, in order to please you."

Major Allen Barnaby extracted his well-filled pocket-book from its deep receptacle in the breast of his coat as he spoke, and drawing forth four notes of five dollars each, presented them to his daughter, who received them with a joyous jump, and paid for them with a very hearty kiss.

As no individual, excepting Mrs. Allen Barnaby and Don Tornorino, was near the spot on which this transfer took place, it never occurred to the parties concerned in it that any individual was privy to it, save and except themselves, and those immediately belonging to them. But in this they were mistaken. Quietly seated on a coil of rope, which was concealed from the eyes of the Barnaby race by a huge pile of portmanteaus and carpet bags, was an old long-legged Yankee lawyer, who might have been supposed, even if they had been aware of his vicinity, to have been too much occupied by the newspaper which he seemed to be reading, to have any eyes left for looking about him. Such a conjecture, however, would have been altogether erroneous; Mr. Gabriel Monkton was never so much occupied by anything, when surrounded by his fellow-creatures, as to be unable to look about him. It was by looking about him that he had made his way upwards, from a very dirty little boy, sweeping an office, to a very good-looking gentleman seated at the highest desk in it; and he was too sensible a man to leave off a profitable habit, merely because it had been of use to him; therefore, though he was now a very rich instead of a very poor man, he still continued to find out everything that happened within his reach; and, in one way or another, was pretty sure to find it answer.

It needed no ghost to tell him that Major Allen Barnaby, with his full lips, and his full chest, was no American; he found *that* out before he had turned his quid once, after first glancing at him. And having made this discovery, he watched him, of course, the more narrowly; for there is a great deal more interest, and very often more profit too, in finding out the who, the why, and the wherefore, concerning a foreigner than concerning a native. And then his laughter with his wife was rather of a chuckling and triumphant kind, the tone of which grated a little on the sober ear of

the New Englander, and suggested notions of successful trickery, or, at the very least, of successful barter.

Now, as both these branches of human industry are held by all genuine Yankees to belong to them, almost as a monopoly established by nature herself, it cannot be wondered at if Mr. Gabriel Monkton looked at Major Allen Barnaby with a jealous, if not a suspicious, eye. And then came in full view of the ensconced chewer, the blooming Patty, with her jumping and jollity, her kissing and coaxing; and then the plump pocket-book, and a very advantageous side-view of the contents of one pocket thereof. The mind of Mr. Gabriel Monkton was both analytical and logical, and he never suffered these noble faculties to lie idle on an occasion like the present.

He perceived that the notes thus made visible to him, were the dear, darling, dirty dollar-notes, as precious to his heart as they were familiar to his eyes, and which spoke their birth-place and their origin in a language not to be mistaken. Ergo, this store of wealth was not the travelling cash of an English Niagara visitor, but must have been found, if not made, within the limits of the glorious Union. As to its 'being the product of English bills, bank-notes, or sovereigns changed for convenience into American currency, that was quite out of the question; as no man, in his senses, as the Yankee meditator well knew, would change English money for American, if he could help it; and, therefore, the plethoric form of the pocket-book put the matter out of all doubt.

"How, then, did the fellow get together such an accountable lot of States paper?" (not state-papers—this change in the position of a letter would have rendered the question one of utter indifference to the questioner). It was a puzzle that no unaided guessing or calculating could solve, and, therefore, delightful as were the sensations enjoyed in his present retreat, his heels being thrown considerably higher than his head, his mouth full of tobacco, and the uninterrupted spittoon around him as extensive as his heart could wish—notwithstanding all this, Mr. Gabriel Monkton manfully resolved to sacrifice the enjoyment of it for the purpose of acquiring the information his intelligent mind thirsted to obtain.

With this view he continued to watch the movements of the party till the junior couple had left the senior one, and then letting drop first one leg, and then the other, and placing his light-coloured beaver on his head in such an angle, as gave it the chance of keeping its place during the act of rising, he gave a sort of frog-like spring, and found himself once again in the much less luxurious, but much more ordinary position of a human being; in plain English, he stood upright.

The sound produced by this violent change of attitude, caused Major and Mrs. Allen Barnaby to start, and turn their heads towards him. This was lucky, for it served all the purposes of an introduction.

"No offence, I hope, sir," said Mr. Gabriel Monkton, with a conciliatory sort of nod; "but I expect that I startled your lady a bit."

"Not at all, sir, I assure you," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with one of those swimming, swinging courtesies with which she never failed to honour every new acquaintance; "I am not quite so nervous as that."

"Fine day for a steam, sir," said the lawyer, having acknowledged Mrs. Allen Barnaby's civility by a bow; for Mr. Gabriel Monkton, like the majority of his countrymen (as long at least as they remain on their native soil), never addressed his conversation to a lady while there was one of the nobler sex near, "and a capital boat this, as I expect you'll allow."

"Delightful, sir! Both, both delightful. The weather and the boat too are worthy of America," returned the major, with a smile of great amenity.

"I expect you mean the United States, sir, when you say America; for we can't calculate that this whole quarter of the world can show such craft as this, to say nothing of the weather."

"Unquestionably, sir, I spoke incorrectly," returned the courteous major; "but the fact is, that the immense disproportion, in point of importance, which the nation properly denominated the United States of America, bears to the entire continent, leads Europeans to forget that the quarter of the world called America, contains anything else."

"Likely enough, sir, and in time I should not be very greatly surprised if all the civilised portion of the world was to adopt, and take upon itself the appellation of United States, owning, one and all, maybe, the federal authority of our President. There are considerable many indications, up and down the world, in many directions, that makes it look probable, we think," said Mr. Gabriel Monkton.

"I give you my honour, sir," returned the major, "that the same idea has repeatedly struck me, and for my own part I positively think it would be the salvation of mankind. Indeed, without some measure of that sort, I profess I don't see how the existence of the European nations is to be preserved."

"Why, on this side the water we are all pretty well come to the same notion, that's a fact. But you see, sir, before anything of that kind could be acted upon, we should have a good deal to do in the way of condescending to make sacrifices for the general good," returned Mr. Gabriel Monkton. "There is no denying, sir," he continued, with the modest air of a man acknowledging a weakness, "there is no denying that it is pleasant and agreeable, ay, very pleasant and agreeable, to be first and foremost of all the people of the earth. But if once we take it into our heads to make it a main object with our government that they shall gather all the nations of the world, and sit and brood over them, as I may

say, hatching them out of their present egg-like sort of imprisonment, till they all fly off like so many free-borns, if once we do this, where will our superiority be? All the world will look then to share and share alike, I calculate."

"How admirably true!" exclaimed Mrs. Allen Barnaby, clasping her hands, and turning her great eyes towards the sky. "Is it not a pleasure, major, to listen to such magnificent ideas?"

"I beg your excuse, sir, I did not know your title till your lady named it," said Mr. Gabriel Monkton. "In the English army, I presume, sir!"

"Yes, sir, that is my profession, I am a major in the army, and hold also an appointment on the staff, which I am sorry to say will not permit my being long absent from home. It is a sad punishment for an enlightened Englishman, after once finding himself in the United States, to feel that he shall be obliged to leave them again," said the major, with a sigh.

"I expect it must, sir," returned his new acquaintance.

"Then you don't calculate," he added, after pausing for a moment, "upon continuing here for the purpose of making any speculation in the mercantile line."

"No, sir, I have no idea of the kind. My duty, unfortunately, calls me elsewhere."

"Then you are only here to take a stare at us, I guess, like the rest of the world. Nobody, I expect, counts themselves right down well educated in these days without having come a few thousand miles to look at the citizens of the United States," observed Mr. Gabriel Monkton, the natural harshness of his adust countenance a good deal softened. "It is pretty considerable much of a compliment that; I don't see the way to deny it, that's a fact. And pray, major, may I ask the favour of your name?"

Major Allen Barnaby had meditated more than once since leaving New York upon the probable advantages and disadvantages of once more making some little alteration in his name; but not having fully decided upon the measure, he was now in a manner compelled to decide against it, for he instantly remembered the numerous packages which bore labels which it would not do to contradict, and he therefore answered, though perhaps with some little shadow of hesitation—

"My name, sir, is Allen Barnaby. Permit me to present to you Mrs. Allen Barnaby."

The Yankee bowed stiffly, so stiffly, indeed, that my heroine, who had rarely in the course of her eventful life found it so difficult to draw attention to herself, soon became weary of finding herself *en tiers* where she was not looked upon as a principal, and walked off to a sofa near the stern of the vessel, where two smart looking ladies were already seated, whom she flattered herself she should find means of rendering more sociable than the stiff Mr. Gabriel Monkton.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

MRS. ALLEN BARNABY was not better pleased at leaving the grim-looking Mr. Gabriel Monkton, than he was at losing her company. He was not particularly fond of ladies' society at any time, and just now he thought the wife of his new acquaintance particularly in the way. No sooner was she fairly gone than he changed his tone and manner entirely, and entered at once upon the national cross-examination, to which all strangers are subjected, if intended to be noticed at all.

"And which way, I wonder, may you be travelling, sir, in order to see the most and the best of us?"

"My object at present, sir, is to see something of your magnificent lakes."

"The lakes? Yes, sir, the lakes are magnificent, unaccountable, there's no doubt of it. And where might you happen to start from last?"

"Why we have been a good while merely travelling about from place to place, in order to see everything without allowing ourselves time enough to stay very long anywhere," said the major.

"But where did you start from sir, this trip?" persisted the Yankee.

"Why positively I forget the name of the place. I have a dreadful head for names," replied the Englishman.

"Indeed! Well, then, what was the name of the last place you stopped at, that you do remember?"

"Oh! Baltimore was the last place at which we made any considerable halt. And West Point," added the major, apparently much delighted by the sudden recollection; "yes, I remember, now, we passed a fortnight at a place called West Point most delightfully."

"Indeed?" returned Mr. Gabriel Monkton, with rather a comical accent. "Then I expect that though you are from the old country you have got some relations or connections in the new one?"

"No, indeed! We have no such advantage," replied the major, "I am sure I wish we had; it would be delightful. But why, sir, should you suppose this likely?"

"Well now, in point of fact, I can't realise the notion of any one who has not got relations, either among the lads or the professors, —I can't realise, I say, any one biding at West Point a whole fortnight, because everything curious there can be seen in two or three hours," observed Mr. Gabriel Monkton.

"That is perfectly true, certainly," returned Major Allen

Barnaby, with a good-humoured smile; "but yet, somehow or other, the place had an indescribable charm for us. Perhaps it might arise from its striking resemblance to a favourite scene with which we are familiar at home."

"In the way of a military college do you mean, sir, or just in point of location?" demanded the persevering inquirer.

"Both, my dear sir, both," replied the major, readily. "I have two nephews, whom I perfectly adore, at our military establishment at Sandhurst; and this circumstance, together with the extraordinary similarity of the scenery, produced a most remarkable effect upon us all. My dear wife, who is in all respects most completely a second self to me, was inconceivably touched by the coincidence, and this it was which induced us to remain there so long."

"And what's the name of the great river, Major Allen Barnaby, what answers to our Hudson at our college? It must be pretty considerably larger, I expect, than they have set any of your rivers and streams down in the maps; at least I can't say that I have ever realised any river in England to be equal to our Hudson. What may be the name, sir, of that one that runs below your military establishment?"

"It is the Thames, sir," replied the major, boldly, "which, though not perhaps quite so large just at Sandhurst as the Hudson is at West Point, is, nevertheless, a very noble stream, as I suppose you know."

"Why, as to that, sir, everything goes by comparison," returned Mr. Gabriel Monkton; "and may I be so bold as to ask whether you found the discipline at West Point as much resembling your Sandhurst as the location does?"

"I should say, sir," returned the judicious major, "that the arrangements of all kinds at West Point were incomparably superior to ours; and though my nephews are devilish fine-looking lads, it is impossible not to allow that the American young gentlemen make altogether a much finer appearance. They carry themselves so admirably."

"Likely enough, sir," was the complacent reply. "We mostly reckon that, upon a fair comparison, and an honest judgment, the citizens of the United States are the finest race that Providence has, as yet, created upon the earth. And now, sir, may-I take the freedom to ask which way you are going?"

"Why, upon my word, sir, I am hardly able to answer you," replied the major, with another of his frank and pleasant smiles. "The fact is, you see, sir, that we are travelling so wholly and solely for pleasure, that we took a resolution, at the very beginning, to fix upon nothing, but to go just here, there, and everywhere, as whim and fancy might dictate. You may depend upon it, sir, this is the way to enjoy travelling."

"Well, I don't know; it may perhaps to you gentry of the old

country, who ain't, I expect, particular famous for knowing your own minds; but we American citizens prefer for the most part, I calculate, knowing when we set out to what place we are going," returned Mr. Gabriel Monkton, with a queer little smile.

"Then may I ask, sir, to which point of this most beautiful lake you may be bound," demanded the major, gaily, "as that perhaps may assist me in coming to a decision. I should be delighted, I assure you, in retaining the pleasure of your society as long as possible."

"The boat stops to wood, and put down, and may be take up passengers at Cleveland, and it's a place that in course, like all our towns, has its beauties and recommendations, but nevertheless it is not desirable to stop at for long, in comparison of Sandusky," was the answer.

"Then it is to Sandusky, sir, I presume that you purpose going yourself?" said the major.

"Yes, sir, to Sandusky," replied the other.

Major Allen Barnaby then politely touched his hat and walked off.

Having marked the direction which his lady had taken when she walked off before him, the major, with very proper conjugal feelings, took the same, which soon brought him in sight of the sofa where Mrs. Allen Barnaby had taken refuge, and on which she still sat, together with the two ladies whom she had found there. The excellent husband's amiable feelings in seeking her were immediately rewarded by seeing her rise from her place the moment she perceived him, and come forward to take his arm.

"Well, I have been questioned enough, I hope, for one bout," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as soon as they had moved out of hearing. "In my life I never met with such curious people as those two women."

"Then I hope you have been as cautious as they were curious, my dear?" said the major, looking a little anxious. "I have been undergoing a sharp questioning also, and my answers were calculated to give as little information as possible. I hope and trust that yours were given in the same spirit, for it would be rather suspicious if we were caught telling different stories."

"Then all we have got to hope, major, is, that your curious man, and my curious women, do not belong to the same party; for as sure as the sun's in heaven, I have answered pretty nearly the truth to every question they have asked; except, you know, just for setting oneself off a little, which of course everybody does when they are talking about themselves to strangers; one must blaze away a little then or never; but excepting trying to make them think that I was a distant relation to blood royal, or something of that sort, I give you my honour I have not told a single lie."

"Then I give you my honour, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, that you are considerably more of a fool than I gave you credit for. After all I told you at Saratoga, I do think you might have found some better theme to descant upon, than the explaining at full length

where we came from and all the rest of it," replied her husband, frowning.

"I never said a single syllable about you, my dear," replied Mrs. Allen Barnaby; "I only talked a little of our delightful season at the Springs, and I'm sure you had nothing to do with that, not even the paying for it. Besides, it's nonsense making a fuss, Donny, what's done is done. If you had any particular lies of your own that you wished me to tell, you should have said so. You know perfectly well, my dear, that I consider it quite a matter of duty in all that sort of thing, to do exactly what you desire. However, I flatter myself there is no harm done, for the chances are fifty to one that your man and my women don't belong to each other."

"Don't they?" retorted Major Allen Barnaby, in a tone much less amiable than usual. "Just look to the right, if you please."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby did look to the right, and thereupon certainly saw reason to doubt the accuracy of the opinion she had thus expressed; her fifty to one would have been a losing bet, for there stood Mr. Gabriel Monkton in the very closest converse with the two ladies she had just quitted, evidently listening to some information they were bestowing upon him with great attention; and what made this circumstance the more alarming, was that the very instant she turned her head towards them, they exchanged sinister glances, and ceased to speak.

The major was evidently much annoyed, but his usual excellent judgment prevented his indulging himself in reproaches to his admirable helpmate; on the contrary, he said to her with the same flattering air of confidence as usual—

"We have certainly got into a scrape, my Barnaby, with these confounded people, and all we can do now is to get quit of them as soon as possible. It will be best, too, not for us to seem confabulating and consulting together, so you go your way, and I'll go mine; but remember, we must both of us carry with us eyes and ears, which may be more profitably used than our tongues."

So saying, he walked away, leaving his penitent wife determined to atone for her indiscretion by keeping so sharp a look-out as might enable them to guess if any disagreeable consequences were likely to arise from her having given one account of their party, and her dearly beloved husband another.

These good resolutions were soon rewarded with the success they deserved; for upon her retiring to the ladies' cabin, and turning into one of the little beds which occasional rough weather upon this inland sea rendered necessary, she speedily found herself in the most favourable position possible for ascertaining how much mischief she had done.

On this occasion it may be observed, that the weather was peculiarly fine, and on the bosom of Lake Erie as calm and as unruffled as the gentle canal in St. James's Park. It was not, therefore, from

any feeling of indisposition that my heroine thus withdrew herself, drawing the muslin curtains between herself and the rest of the world, so as to prevent any chance of her being seen; on the contrary, she never was in better health, or with spirits more on the alert to catch everything which might come within reach of her ambushed ear.

Ere she had remained ten minutes in the retreat thus cleverly chosen, two young ladies entered the cabin together, one of whom she immediately discovered to be the youngest of the two curious fair ones she had encountered on the deck.

"Oh my! This is jam, Arethusa," exclaimed this pretty daughter of an ugly father, for she was in truth no less a personage than the sore heiress of Mr. Gabriel Monkton. "We shall have some capital fun this frolic. Pa and ma between 'em have come right down upon a set of Englishers, who are sailing under false colours. There never was such a man as pa, I expect, for catching out folks of this sort!"

"Well! I'm sure that if I was at the top of the tree, he should just have a statue for it," replied the animated Arethusa, adding with still greater energy, "all the English are, to my fancy, first-rate disgusting. But what is that your pa has found out this time?"

"Oh my! It is just a proper Yankee bit of cleverness, I promise you; but I can't just go it all over now, 'cause I must go up again as soon as I have fixed my curls, to help ma find out some more if she can; but I can tell you this much, that pa means to watch this major, as he calls himself, pretty close, and swears he shan't go on shore without having him at his heels. And what's to come next, I can't say, but pa will take care of that; and ma says, that she calculates upon our having the fun of seeing 'em marched off to prison. Come along, Arethusa, what a slow girl you are! I have done fixed my hair, spit-curls and all, before you have done twiddling with your collar."

The fair friends then departed, leaving Mrs. Allen Barnaby to meditate on what she had heard. She did meditate, and to some purpose too, for before she again squeezed her ample person through the all too narrow entrance to the bed on which she reposed herself, she had fully arranged the mode and the means by which she should extricate her husband from the inconvenience likely to arise from her having stated that they came from one place, while he had as positively declared they came from another.

She knew better, however, than to make her way up to the deck by the stairs leading from the ladies' cabin, which might perchance betray rather too plainly to the young beauties, who had just taken that direction, how indiscreetly they had chosen the place of their late conference.

Passing through the gentlemen's cabin, therefore, and reaching the deck at its extremity, she was presently leaning over the gallery-

rail at a point almost as far removed as possible from the retreat where she had so cleverly lain in ambush; and here, having for some time espied her, the cautious major at length ventured to join her.

"Well," said he, taking his place close at her side, and placing himself in an attitude that seemed to manifest great interest in the breaking of the "wavelets" against the planks of the vessel, "well, have you made any discoveries, my dear?"

"Discoveries!" she repeated, "I believe I have made discoveries. But never mind, Donny; don't agitate yourself. I'll get you out of this scrape, as cleverly as I did from that of Big-Gang Bank."

She then hastily but very intelligibly recited what she had heard, but upon his uttering a few expletives, indicative of some slight irritation of temper at the disagreeable turn the adventure seemed likely to take, she stopped him somewhat authoritatively, saying, with an uplifted finger and a flashing eye—

"Not another word, Major Allen Barnaby, in the way of reproach or complaining, or I leave you to your fate! Difficulties seem but to excite and expand my genius, and I feel the same happy confidence in my own powers, which I ever have done through every stage of my remarkable existence; but in order to enable me to put this to profit, you must give my powers full scope, major. If you will let me have my own way, and do exactly what I bid you, I'll have you on shore at Cleveland, without letting that odious scarecrow of a man know one bit about it, any more than that tall chimney there."

"Set about it, then," returned her husband, with more sharpness of tone than was usual with him, for he was in truth too thoroughly vexed at the result of her tattling communications to be at all disposed to encourage the vapouring style she had assumed. For one moment she looked at him earnestly, and seemed doubting whether she should resent his want of politeness and abandon him to his fate, or generously forgive his petulance, and again extend her helping hand to save him. The very wise second thought which suggested the impossibility of punishing the contumacious major alone, at once decided the question, and with a smile, half playful, half reproachful, she said—

"Come, come, Donny, no sour looks, if you please; only be grateful, and acknowledge as you have sometimes done before, that I am your good angel, and I will take care that you are a free man still."

"Forgive me, my Barnaby," said the again smiling major, "if I permitted myself to doubt for a moment that my cause was a safe one, if you undertook its defence. But what in the world is it that you propose to do, my dear love? I protest to you that I think this business is a very awkward one."

"Not a bit of it," replied his wife, cheerily. "Pray, my dear,

do you think you have sufficient strength of mind to endure with tolerable composure the seeing me exceedingly ill again ? ”

“ That expressive word, *again*, reassures me, my charming Barnaby ; for it at once turns the threatened illness into an admirable jest. But do you really think, my dear, that you could put off this trick again, so as to get me free from this devilish steam-boat, without being followed by this grim Gabriel ? ”

“ The old trick, Donny, with the assistance of a new one following it,” she replied, “ will, I think, suffice to do all we want. But I don’t believe it *is* quite a new trick either, for I remember hearing something very like it before ; but it is not the worse for that, you know, if it serves our turn. And now listen, and you shall know what I mean to do, and what I mean you to do. You will see me presently walking down the ladies’ stairs into the little cabin ; when I get there I will wash my face, you know, Donny, just as I did before, and when this is done I will crawl up again, looking very poorly indeed. And then you must help me to the sofa, and then I must lie down, and then you must go and bring Patty to me, and then I must send her to borrow one of the ladies’ smelling-bottles, and then I suppose they will come to me, when I shall take care to make them understand, that heavenly beautiful as their great big lake may be, the movement of the boat on it makes me very ill. In short, I shall make everybody understand that I am determined to land at the first stopping-place, which I understand is called Cleveland.”

Mrs. Allen Barnaby paused for an instant to take breath, upon which the major ventured to hint that he greatly doubted if the mere circumstance of their landing at Cleveland, instead of Sandusky, would suffice to distance Mr. Gabriel Monkton, if indeed he were as determined to track him, as the language she had overheard seemed to indicate.

A whole volume of scorn flashed from the eyes of my heroine as she listened to these words.

“ You doubt it, major, do you ? And to tell you the truth, my dear, I doubt it too. Depend upon it, if I thought he could be so easily put off, I should give myself no further trouble about the matter. You must hear a little more first, if you please, before you venture to decide whether my scheme will answer or not. After having clearly given these ladies to understand that I mean to land at Cleveland, I shall declare myself unable to sit up any longer, and you and Patty must help me down stairs, and lay me upon the bed. Well then, imagine us all down there as snug as possible—of course, you know as well as I do, that whenever anything happens which takes any of the ladies’ husbands into the ladies’ cabin, all the other females, as they call themselves, keep clear of it, as if they thought that he was a shark going to swallow them all up. We shall therefore have the cabin entirely to ourselves, and then I will dress you in my large long cloak, petticoats,

and all that, and you shall put on my large Leghorn sun-bonnet and white lace veil, and Patty shall help you up to the deck exactly when the boat stops, which they say is just when it is getting dark. The passage and all that, you know, is paid already. Tornorino shall go with you, and if any questions are asked about '*the Major*,' Patty shall say that you are going on to Sandusky, because you expect some one to meet you there on business, and that we shall travel by land under the escort of the Don to join you there. What do you say to this, major?"

"But what on earth is to become of you, my dear, if you remain here on board by yourself?" demanded the major, affectionately.

"Don't trouble yourself about me, my dear," she replied, gaily. "There's a number of shabby-looking women on board, and I mean, as soon as it gets dusk, to go up amongst them dressed quite differently from what I am now. There's that old tartan cloak, you know, will cover me up completely, and I have no doubt in the world that I shall get out of the boat with the rest of the riff-raff, without any single soul taking notice of me. You know their way of always making everybody pay at the half-way station, and that prevents anybody's being looked after, when they step on shore."

"You are perfectly right, my dear Barnaby, as to that, and I do declare that, considering the hour for landing, and all the other circumstances, I see no reason in the world why the plot should not succeed. Besides, it is your invention, you know, and that gives me confidence, for everything you do succeeds."

"Why, I must confess," she replied, "that I have rarely taken it into my head to plot and plan *without* succeeding. However, though I take credit to myself for the invention, or at any rate for the adopting it, you must please to remember, Donny, that a good deal of its success must depend upon yourself. I am quite sure that this fellow expects somehow or other to make a good thing of catching you. There are a good many queer tricks, you know, practised in this country, of one sort or another, and I take it these Yankees are up to a thing or two, as well as your friends at New Orleans. Perhaps he suspects that you have not been visiting their glorious and immortal institutions for nothing, and may hope that if he keeps you in sight for a day or two, something may turn up about you, my dear, which might make somebody or other very grateful to him for having looked after you a little."

"And that's precisely what will happen, Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as sure as your graceful and ever charming form hangs over this rail. So far you understand the circumstances of the case to perfection. But I do not exactly perceive how any exercise of my own peculiar talents upon this occasion, can in any way assist in enabling us to avoid the catastrophe we anticipate."

"Your own *peculiar* talent, Donny, may have been more

necessary to get you into the scrape than out of it ; nevertheless, my dear, I have sufficient confidence in your general cleverness and ability, to feel assured of your passing with more than credit, with honour, through that part of the business which must inevitably fall to your share," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby.

"And pray what part of the business may that be, my dear?" demanded the major. "If it means the walking under your garments with equal grace to yourself, I must fail; the thing is impossible."

"Tranquillise your spirits, my love, on that point," returned the lady, with a playfully tender smile; "nothing of the sort will be necessary. In about two hours it will be quite dark enough for you to walk as you will under my garments, without any eye being likely to perceive the difference. Your part of the acting must take place immediately. After you have left me upon the sofa with Patty listening to my groans, you must assume a very unfond and unfeeling air (foreign to your heart, my love, of course, but absolutely necessary to your circumstances), and having sought and found your agreeable new acquaintance, Mr. Gabriel Monkton, you must tell him that I am horribly sick, and then you must swagger a little about the horrid bore of travelling with women, and then you must swear that you would not miss seeing the person you are to meet at Sandusky for all the sick women in the world, but add, with some little show of softer feeling, that for all that, you are not such a brute either, as to insist upon my going on; and then you may speak of the excellent qualities of Tornorino, and the perfect satisfaction with which you can trust me to his care, and to that of my daughter. It is in this scene, my dear major, that you must display the talent for which I give you credit. When you have performed this, you must conclude by telling him that you must intrude into the ladies' cabin in order to apprise the ladies of your party that they must land at Cleveland without you; and then you may walk off to find us, taking care ostentatiously to proclaim as you go, your regret at the necessity which obliges you to take the liberty of entering that apartment, and taking care also that Gabriel does not lose sight of you a moment sooner than is absolutely necessary. Five minutes' retreat with Patty and me, will suffice for your toilet. You must make our good Tornorino understand his part in our little domestic drama, and school him to knock at the door of the cabin as soon as the boat reaches Cleveland. He must give you his arm through the gentlemen's cabin, the stairs from which open upon the deck close to the gangway by which they go ashore. I shall follow at some distance after, with a bundle and basket, like one of the market women; and of course you are none of you to take any notice of me, but depend upon it I will take very good care of myself. Tornorino must set about collecting all our luggage for landing at Cleveland, and place it near the gangway. And now, Mr. Major,

what do you say to it? Do you feel competent to undertake your part?"

"I think I may venture to say that I do," he replied; "so now let us begin. Move the first, is your descending to the cabin, in order to remove that slight and unnecessary addition to your charms, which fashion, my dear love, has induced you to adopt. Go, then! and rely upon it that I shall neither mistake the order of the subsequent scenes, nor forget my cue."

Perfectly satisfied with the spirit of active obedience which she read in her clever husband's eye, she gave him an approving nod, and moved off.

CHAPTER XL.

It was impossible for Major Allen Barnaby to watch the painful languor of movement with which his charming wife withdrew from his side without admiration. Long as he had been her husband, he really did admire her exceedingly. Nor was the feeling of that light and idle kind which leads to nothing. He felt all her claim upon his ready co-operation in the scheme she had sketched out, and instantly began his share of the work by seeking Tornorino, and explaining to him both the business he had to perform, and the reason for it.

This was not a sort of business on which the graceful Don was at all likely to be dull of comprehension, and the major left him, on seeing his pale and trembling "*Barnaby*" emerge again from the ladies' cabin, quite satisfied with the ready acquiescence he expressed. In the next moment the attentive husband was by his pallid lady's side, and having, according to order, laid her gently upon the sofa, he bustled off to seek his daughter. And now it was that the greatest difficulty arose.

Patty, upon being assured that her mother was sea-sick, or lake-sick, and desired her assistance, burst forth in her usual style of free remonstrance upon the absurdity of supposing that she could do her any good.

"Lor, papa!" she exclaimed, "how you do spoil her! I don't believe she's any more sick than I am. Why, she eat like a wolf at breakfast. I do wish you would let me alone, papa. I want to stay here till Tornorino comes back; he said he was only going for a minute, and he'll think I am tumbled overboard, if he does not find me here."

It has been hinted before, that the major, from some little feeling of paternal weakness, did not wish that his daughter should be made fully acquainted with all the manœuvrings to which he occa-

sionally found himself compelled to have recourse, when his affectionate regard for the welfare of his family induced him to practise any trifling irregularity in his monetary transactions. It was this feeling which now embarrassed him. Patty, as everybody knows, was a very quick, intelligent young woman, and a very few words would have sufficed to make her comprehend the whole business; but Major Allen Barnaby did not like to speak these few words. He knew, however, that the co-operation of his daughter, in the rather hazardous scheme now afoot, was absolutely necessary, and therefore, after looking at her with an air of perplexity for half a minute, he said—

"Come, come, Patty, you must not only be a good girl, but a very particularly good girl just now, or we shall get into a worse scrape than you think for. After you all left New York, I got among a set of worthless chaps, which it is very difficult to help doing sometimes in a strange country, and we got quarrelling, and, as ill-luck would have it, one of the fellows insisted upon it that I should fight a duel with him, which, I am sorry to say, ended fatally. I am sure I did not know it at the time, but I have been told since, that the United States government never forgives a man who kills another in a duel, and I am therefore now in the greatest possible danger of being taken up and executed."

"Lor, papa! How horrid!" exclaimed Patty, looking a little terrified; "but what has all this to do with ma's being sick?"

"A great deal, my dear, as you will find, if you will but have patience to listen to me," he replied. "I have discovered within this hour, Patty, that I am suspected by a man on board, and my only chance of saving myself, is by getting on shore disguised as a woman."

"Oh, goodness! What fun!" exclaimed Madame Tornorino, clapping her hands with an air of great hilarity. "But lor, pa! they'll be sure to find you out."

"I hope not, my dear," said the major, gravely; "but this will depend entirely on the manner in which my family assist me."

He then explained to her the mode in which he intended to proceed, endeavouring to impress upon her mind the absolute necessity of silence and caution amongst them all, and the conversation ended at last by her saying in a whisper, but very earnestly—

"Well, pap, it shan't be my fault if you are hanged, you may depend upon that."

Perfectly contented by this affectionate assurance, the major then dismissed her, and the subsequent scenes of the drama followed exactly in the order which Mrs. Allen Barnaby had laid down, and without any blundering whatever on the part of the *dramatis personæ*, till the critical moment arrived when the major, with one arm resting on that of Tornorino, and the other raised in order to hold a pocket-handkerchief to his mouth, stepped forth

with a languid air from the ladies' cabin, and began his hazardous progress through the long saloon appropriated to the gentlemen.

Nothing could possibly be better than the arrangement of his drapery. The large shawl thrown over his shoulders completely disguised the outline of his person ; and perhaps no man of his age, measuring five feet ten and a half, ever contrived to contract his limbs more skilfully than did Major Allen Barnaby, as he slowly moved onwards. It was probably the perfect success with which he enacted his wife's attitude as he drooped his head a little on one side, while his feathers and flowing veil drooped also, that upset the gravity of Patty, which, till that moment, she had sustained admirably, but then, for one short moment, she forgot herself, and exclaiming aloud, "Oh! my goodness, how funny!" she clapped her hands in her usual joyous style, and laughed outright.

The admirable presence of mind of the Don, however, prevented any fatal effects from this thoughtless sally.

"Der is nothing to laugh, my lof, in de sickness," he said, shaking his head very gravely, while the really suffering major uttered so sad and womanly a sigh, that if anybody had thought about them at all, it could only have been to deprecate the hard-hearted levity of the young woman, who could find amusement in her feeble mother's sufferings. Fortunately, however, the two or three persons who were scattered through the long room, were too much occupied by their own concerns to pay any attention to the group, and they made their way to the top of the stairs just as the first rush of the persons intending to land at Cleveland, was elbowing and shouldering its way across the plank. Either from the fear that a too close juxtaposition with those who were jostling one another as they crossed, might betray him, or else from the wish to be perfectly consistent in the representation of his assumed character, the major held back for a moment, till a dozen or so of the most eager had passed the plank ; then, still preserving with admirable steadiness of demeanour, the timid face of a suffering woman, he too crossed it, Tornorino very carefully stepping backwards as he preceded him, and the penitent Patty following, looking as grave as a judge.

In this manner they very safely reached the bank ; but just as the delighted major felt his feet firmly planted on the sod, and while he was thinking that he might now venture to recover himself a little, and take, under shadow of the darkness, a tolerably vigorous step forward, he felt a somewhat heavy arm upon his shoulder, and fully expected in the next moment to see the long visage of Mr. Gabriel Monkton peering at him.

"Can I be of any use to you, ladies?" said a voice at his ear, which even at that moment of agitation he felt certain was not the voice of the dreaded Gabriel. "You seem a little bewildered, I think, and if I can be of any service, you may command me."

These very obliging words, added by the same voice, which

though certainly not that of Mr. Gabriel Monkton, did not appear to the major to be perfectly unknown, caused him to turn his head towards the speaker, and even to hazard the danger of rendering visible the "pearl under his muffler," by raising his veil for the purpose of obtaining as good a view, as the waning light would permit, of the features of this courteous stranger.

On turning his eyes in the direction from whence the voice came, he perceived a stout-looking country-wife sort of a body, with a shabby old bonnet pulled low over her face, a very worn-out shawl, a common cotton-gown pulled up through the pocket-holes, and a pair of fat, naked arms, with sleeves pushed up considerably above the elbow.

The woman stepped back as soon as the major's eye fell upon her, and addressing Patty, who followed close behind, said—

"You are a very pretty young lady, upon my word. Would you like to have your fortune told, miss?"

"Miss! indeed!" cried the indignant married woman, who even in that moment of peril could not permit such a blunder to pass unnoticed. "What a fool of a woman you must be, to fancy I am an unmarried girl! We don't want any of your help, you may depend upon that, so you may get away, and let us walk on by ourselves in peace and quiet."

"Walk on in peace, my pretty dear, by all means," said the woman; "but don't be so fond of quiet as to send off good company."

"Major Allen Barnaby, notwithstanding the very good reasons he had for wishing to advance beyond the reach of a recall from the steamboat, nevertheless lingered on the way for the purpose of hearing the above dialogue, and when it had reached this point, he suddenly stopped, and having looked round him on all sides without perceiving any one pursuing, or appearing particularly to notice them, he cautiously pronounced the word "Wife!" at no great distance from the ear of the female who had thus beset Patty.

"It is not every wise child that knows its own mother," said the voice of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, from beneath the humble weeds of the seeming stranger; "nevertheless, a runaway gentleman, it seems, may know his own wife.

"How could you be so stupid, Patty? However, this is no time to stand mumming and making fun," continued my heroine, for she indeed it was, who had thus unceremoniously addressed the party. "Look along the road, major," she added, applying herself to the ear of the tall lady who still rested on the arm of Don Tornorino. "Look along the road, and you will see in what direction the danger lies. You and I must not go that way. Stop one minute, all of you, and I will tell you what must be done. You and I, Madame Feathers-and-lace, must just betake ourselves to the shelter of that particularly dark-looking corner yonder between that barn-looking building and the trees, and there, I flatter myself,

we may contrive both to hide ourselves till the steamboat is off again; and then, by the help of this basket and bundle, make ourselves, both of us, more fit to be seen. You, Tornorino and Patty, must immediately run back to look after the luggage. Here is some silver for you to pay one of those porters there that are galloping with their trucks down to the landing-place to look after a job. When you have got everything on shore, five trunks, two portmanteaus, three hampers, and four carpet-bags, REMEMBER, when you have got it all together, take it to the first handsome-looking hotel you come to; there, look, Tornorino, it must be that house where, dark as it is getting, you can distinguish so many people before the door. Take all the things there, and as soon as you have heard the bell ring, and seen the boat fairly off, the major and I will come strolling up, as if we had but just that minute stepped on shore, and you and Patty had better be on the look-out for us."

Even Patty seemed at this moment to feel that it was a master-spirit who thus rapidly dictated what was to be done, and with a greater degree of passive obedience than was at all usual to her, she quietly placed herself by her husband's side, took hold of his offered arm, and without another word being spoken by any of the party, they divided, and marched off exactly as my ready-witted heroine had commanded.

The most intimate knowledge of the locality could not have enabled this admirable woman more judiciously to select a spot for arranging the attire of herself and husband than the one which *she* had thus instinctively chosen; no eye, no sound, no even imagined danger, occurred to scare or interrupt them, and several minutes before the parting bell of the steamboat was heard, they were both of them attired in all respects exactly as they had been when they first stepped on board her. The interval of waiting which followed was gratefully employed by the major in expressing to his charming wife a part, at least, of the admiration and tenderness which her admirable conduct had inspired. Nothing, in fact, could be more amiable than the manner in which these sentiments were uttered and received; Major and Mrs. Allen Barnaby were indeed a perfect pattern couple.

The signal for which they had waited having been at length heard, and sufficient time allowed for the little wharf near which they had to pass, to have recovered its usual tranquillity, the excellently-matched pair walked forth from the shelter of the lofty catalpa trees, beneath which they had repaired their toilets, and one taking the bag, and the other the basket, with the careless air with which active-minded travellers do take bags and baskets on quitting steamboats, they sauntered, arm-in-arm, first *to* the wharf, and then *from* the wharf, with the aspect and manner of intelligent and curious strangers, desirous of looking about them, and seeing everything that was to be seen.

In this manner they approached the Washington's Head hotel, at the door of which they found the grinning Patty, and her more sober-minded spouse, who both greeted them at the same moment; the former by clapping her hands, and exclaiming, "Well done, ma and pa! If you ain't two good ones!"

The latter, by gently observing that, "All de tings were com, and rooms bespeak."

Never had Mrs. Allen Barnaby walked up a room with more dignity than she now did that of the *table d'hôte* of the Washington's Head. It was nearly impossible at any time that she could pass unnoticed, so peculiarly striking were her person and demeanour, but it now was less possible than ever. The triumph of success, the pride of genius, and the consciousness of noble daring, brightened her eye, and rendered firm her step. Every eye in the room was fixed upon her. The observant major saw this and trembled. But the same benignant destiny which had bestowed my heroine upon him as a wife, seemed to guard him at this happy moment from any accident which might render this blessing abortive; for not one of the passengers who had accompanied them from Buffalo was in the room, or even the house. Of those who had landed, by far the greater number had returned on board; and of the rest, some had gone at once to their homes in the town of Cleveland, and the rest to some other of the hotels.

It was not immediately, however, that even our bold major ventured to look about him sufficiently to ascertain this important and very agreeable fact; but at length, as his modest glances reached further and further round the room, he felt delightedly convinced that so it was. Anything more genial, more domestically sociable, more liberally cheering than this supper at the Washington's Head, Cleveland, can scarcely be imagined. The major ordered champagne, the ladies declared it first-rate, and the Don, whose happy temperament never required anything for the enjoyment of perfect felicity but the absence of want of all kinds, and the presence of all such good things as his taste particularly approved, was perfectly touching in his manner of partaking his repast; and when he said, as the last drop was drained from the second bottle into the glass of his august mother-in-law—

"Ah, ma! one little drop more for my Pati!" it would have required a much harder heart than that of the major to have withstood the hint. A third bottle of champagne was accordingly ordered, and when it had vanished, and not till then, my heroine and her fair daughter retreated for the night, leaving the major and his son-in-law to talk over the adventures of the last few days.

CHAPTER XLI.

It can surprise nobody to hear that Mrs. Allen Barnaby did not rise very early on the following morning. She really had exerted herself greatly through the eventful day which had been passed on board the steamboat, and even the very act of taking what she felt to be needful refreshment afterwards, contributed to the necessity of lengthened rest on the following morning. It was not, therefore, till past ten o'clock on that morning, that my heroine was seen majestically descending the stairs of the hotel, adorned with very considerable care and elegance, and with an expression of countenance perfectly radiant from the effect of the meditations in which she had indulged during the time she had employed in dressing. Her position was, in truth, at this moment such as could not fail to cheer the spirits of any woman possessed of such a mind as hers. No philosopher, whether ethical, moral, or military, could be more aware of the sinewy species of strength and power given by money, than was my heroine; and never had she felt so delightful an assurance of having money at her command as at that moment. The very stairs, as they creaked beneath her tread, seemed to do her homage, while the glances of a group of men stationed at the street door, which stood open immediately in front of her as she descended, caused her to remember that, considering her size, she had a very well-formed foot, and thus, as is the case of the charming Musidora—

A sense
Of self-approving beauty stole across
Her busy thought—

and completed the happiness of the moment.

But, alas for the short-lived felicity of mortals! Scarcely had the smile suggested by the thought above alluded to dimpled on her cheek, than her eye caught the countenance of her husband, which, equally to her surprise and displeasure, was no longer decked in grateful and affectionate jocosity, as she had reasonably hoped to meet it, but wore an aspect of uneasiness and gloom that seemed to speak of anything rather than difficulties overcome, and a heart at ease.

"What's in the wind now?" thought she, as she made the last step of the descent, and swung herself with a graceful sort of impetus round the final banister, in order to follow the direction in which her husband's eye, and the movement of his head, seemed to marshal her.

The moment the major perceived that she understood his signals, he walked rapidly on, and at the distance of some paces disappeared

within a door, through which she also passed the minute after, and then, with equal surprise and alarm, saw him shut and bolt it behind her.

"What on earth is the matter now, Major Allen Barnaby?" said she, knitting her brows, and looking at least a dozen years older than she had done a few minutes before. "You surely have not found time enough to get into another scrape?"

"You should say, my dear, that I have not found time enough to get out of an old one. How much or how little danger threatens me at this moment, I am really unable to say; but perhaps when I have told you exactly what I have heard, you may be able to give me better advice than I could give myself. You know, my dear, what a confidence I have in your judgment, and upon my honour I never wanted a little help more in my life, for hang me if I know which way to turn, or what to do."

"Let me hear the worst at once," she replied with some slight movement of impatience; "I dare say I shall find a way out of the scrape just as easily as you found your way into it."

"Heaven grant you may, my dear, but I shall say you are a witch if you do. The case is this: I got up this morning, while you were still fast asleep, and on coming down stairs I found a whole bevy of gentlemen tipplers taking their morning dram at the bar. I threw a pretty sharp look amongst them to find out if any of our late fellow passengers were of the set, and presently became perfectly certain that there was not one. Whereupon I drew near among the rest, and although, as you know well enough I am no great dram-drinker, I called for a glass like the others, that I might see and hear a little what was going on. The first words which regaled my ears were these: 'A pretty considerable queer spec old Gabriel Monkton seems after this go. Did you hear about it, colonel?' The personage thus addressed was no other than our right worshipful landlord, and he replied with all the dignity of his military rank, and his distinguished office united, 'Hear of it? I expect I did. Gabriel has promised me I don't know how many votes if I will keep a sharp look-out after the females. And that I promised, and that I'll do, provided I can be availed of what they are like and where they are lodged. The man himself, him what he suspects, you know, is still snug enough on board, he told me, but the woman and another man belonging to them was to land last night, on account of our glorious lake disagreeing with their English stomachs. If it wasn't for Gabriel's telling me the man was still aboard, and that the woman had but one man with them, I should be apt to suspect that we had got the very identical set in the house at this moment.' Now, wife, what do you say to that, by way of a pleasant hint? And how, in the d—l's name are we to steer clear through such a confounded set of breakers as it is easy to see ahead?"

"You have not told me all, as yet, major," said my heroine,

anxiously ; " you have not told me if any of the party took particular notice of you ? "

" Not the least in the world," he replied. " Half-a-dozen of them began immediately to talk together, and having paid my fip' for my glass to a young urchin who was acting as deputy to his father at the bar, I suffered three or four fresh stragglers to push on before me to listen to the long-winded colonel's history of all that was known or suspected about myself, and quietly withdrew from the infernal set without appearing to attract the least attention from any one. Now then, wife, that is all and everything I have got to tell you ; and I shall be very happy, in my turn, to listen to anything and everything you may wish to say upon it, by way of commentary."

It was at least two minutes before Mrs. Allen Barnaby answered this appeal, but so eloquently meditative was her countenance that the major, notwithstanding the urgent necessity he felt there was for immediate action, betrayed no symptom of impatience, but waited in perfect silence till his charming oracle spoke.

" This is just about the worst job we've had, major," she said at length ; " for as sure as you stand there, we shall have a regular hue and cry after us throughout the country ; and as it is not possible to stir an inch without being examined by every man, woman, and child you meet, as if you were before a court of justice, it will certainly be no easy matter to keep clear of discovery. However, it won't do, Donny, to stand still in despair, and cry ' all's over ! ' We are neither of us fit for that sort of pitiful work. Faint heart, they say, never won fair lady, and I am sure faint heart never saved bold gentleman. Do you remember, my dear, the sort of dress and demeanour which your lively fancy induced you to assume when you were first introduced to my relations, the Huberts, at Brighton ? "

" Oh yes, perfectly," said the major, briskly. " I thought it advisable to be in the saint line then, in order to assimilate myself to the character of the former Mr. O'Donagough."

" Exactly so, my dear," said his wife ; " but though you remember this, I am sure you do not remember (for it was impossible you could judge of it) the inconceivable alteration which this dress and manner made in your appearance. It is impossible any disguise could be more complete. What I should propose, therefore, is, that you resume this for the time we remain in the country. For let rumours be circulated about you either from New Orleans, Big-Gang Bank, Philadelphia, New York, or this nasty, hateful Lake Erie, this disguise would completely baffle them all, for in neither of these places, my dear, did you think proper to appear at all in the likeness of a saint. And besides, you know, there is not a country in the whole world where it would be likely to answer better in every respect ; for while we were at the Springs I heard a dozen different histories at the very least, all showing the extraor-

dinary respect and veneration in which the travelling evangelical preachers are held. They told me that if a new dancing-girl and a new preacher appeared in a town at the same time, it was always a very close run contest between them, and generally ended by all the gentlemen following the dancer, and all the ladies the preacher. Now this would do for you exactly, Donny, because none of your little tricks have been played off upon the ladies, and therefore none of them, go where we may, will be likely to find you out."

"But surely, my dear, you don't expect me actually to set up for a preacher?" cried the major, looking a good deal alarmed.

"And pray, why not, Major Allen Barnaby?" replied his high-spirited wife; "what in the world should prevent you?"

"The not having your universal and commanding genius, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," he rejoined, adding, very gravely, "I have not the slightest objection to shave close, mustache, *favoris*, and all, if you advise it, and I shall not wonder if, in fact, it were to prove the very best thing I could possibly do. But as to mounting a pulpit, I must confess that I do not feel a call for it. I am convinced that I should stand staring at the congregation like a fool, without being able to say a word."

"Nonsense, major! When did you ever find it difficult to palaver? You are the very man for it. We will just contrive, if we can, that you shall hear some high-flying preacher once, and when you see how it is done, you will find it easy enough to set off in the same style, I'll be bound for you."

"Well, then—set about it, my Barnaby! You are a wonder of a woman, and I believe you could make me do anything in the world that you took it into your head to command. Just say when I must shave, and where I must go, and what I must preach, and you shall find me a perfect pattern of obedience."

"You are a perfect pattern of wisdom, Donny, I will say that for you. A wise man, when he is sinking, always holds fast—I take it—to what he thinks is most likely to float, and that you do this, my good major, I believe nobody will deny; and for that very reason, my dear, you will always find me ready and willing to hold out a helping hand to save you."

"Upon my soul! I have found it so, and I should more than once have been puzzled to know what to do without you, there is no denying it. Now, then, I presume you mean to be off from this place directly. There's a boat goes by to Sandusky at eleven this morning, and another at nine in the evening, but, of course, the first will suit us best."

"Do you really think so, major?" said my heroine, looking in his face, with an eye that laughed very saucily. "If you do, I must confess that I do think you want a little of my assistance."

"What *do* you mean?" said the major, slightly frowning, but at the same time firmly resolved to preserve his good humour, let his lady say what she would; "what *can* you mean by saying that?"

"I mean, Major Allen Barnaby," replied his wife, with mock solemnity, "that, if it be your will and pleasure to decide upon this mode of proceeding, the chances are about a thousand to one in favour of our being followed to Sandusky as suspicious characters."

"I have no doubt of it, Mrs. Allen Barnaby," replied the persecuted gentleman, rather tartly; "my own opinion is that the chances are about two thousand to half a one in favour of the agreeable catastrophe to which you allude."

"Then why risk it, my love?" said his wife, hanging her head sentimentally, and speaking with great tenderness of accent.

"And how avoid it?" he returned, precisely with the same attitude and tone.

"Wait one instant, and I will tell you," said his wife, placing her finger on her forehead and closing her eyes to give her thoughts uninterrupted range within. Having remained thus alone, as it were, for half a moment, she said, "In *this* way you must avoid it. Let us both immediately return to our room, you mounting the stairs first, and I behind you. No particular notice has been directed your way as yet. All was bustle and confusion when we came in last night, the waiters had just time enough to bring us all we called for, and, as it seemed, no more; for, if you remember, there was not one of them that remained in the room a moment after the wine, or whatever it was, had been set down. This morning, by your account, there was no more leisure for curious examination, than there was last night, so that I flatter myself you and your whiskers are not as yet much known by sight among them. Having reached our room, Donny, we will lock the door, and then I will shear you as close as a May-day lamb, in which operation your razor shall assist my scissors. And, then, Major Allen Barnaby, I will open the smallest of the three great trunks, and prove to you that, if I do upon some occasions expend a great deal in dress, with a view to the honour and respectability of my family, there are others when the most thoughtful economy in this respect is the rule of my actions. Do you remember, my dear, the black and gray suit in which you dined at the house of my nephew, General Hubert, at Brighton?"

"Yes, perfectly," replied the major, smiling, "but it is considerably more than a year ago that I last saw it, and it is quite beyond hope that you should have it here."

Mrs. Allen Barnaby laid her hand upon the bolt of the door to withdraw it, saying—

"Come up stairs with me, major, and you shall see. But cough a little as you pass by the bar, and hold your handkerchief to your face. We must not, just for the present, display your magnificent mustaches."

Thus instructed, and displaying in all ways the most exemplary obedience, the major left the little room in which the above con-

versation had passed, mounted the stairs, and, closely followed by his lady, entered the apartment in which they had passed the night and in which Tornorino had seen their voluminous luggage carefully lodged. Having reached this sanctuary and cautiously secured its door, not a moment was lost by either in performing the business they had in hand; and while she drew forth a complete suit of very evangelical-looking attire, complete even to the white cravat, and gray and black shot-silk waistcoat, he set to work upon his forest-like face, and hewed and mowed away till he was as well shaven and shorn as any reasonable Christian could desire. In the finishing this rather laborious work, she not only found time to assist him, but, as she did so, enlightened him as to what was next to be done, as follows:—

“Now then, Donny, with that dress yonder, carefully put on, and your low-crowned hat, upon this nice gray head, I will defy all the Gabriel Monktons in Yankee-land to identify you. So far, so good. But now listen to the rest. I suspect, by the way I have seen the servant girls coming and going, that there is a back stairs at the end of the long passage just outside our door. While you are dressing, I'll just have a peep as to that matter. If I am right, we know of course that it will open to the back of the house, because the passage runs straight through it. As soon as you get down stairs don't look in a bustle, but move quietly on, like a patient saint, as you are, to find your way out of the back door. This done, you may easily, of course, regain the street, and then make for the Franklin hotel, which you heard them say at the wharf was on the other side of the landing-place. When you get there, order breakfast for yourself and dinner for some friends, who are amusing themselves by looking about, and tell them that your party are going on to Sandusky by the nine o'clock boat. Meantime we will breakfast here, and announce that we are going off by the eleven o'clock boat, and just as it comes in sight I will have all the luggage taken down to the wharf. I will pay the bill, and tell the people that I expect you will meet us on board, but that if you happen to come in after we have left the house, they must send you after us in all haste. All this being provided for, the rest follows without difficulty. When we get down to the wharf at eleven o'clock, we shall, of course, have the dreadful disappointment of finding no Major Allen Barnaby there; whereupon I shall order the porter to set down the baggage, and leave it; and if he, or any of the clamorous waiters, invite us to turn back again, I shall pay them handsomely but decline the invitation, stating, as my reason, that I prefer being near the landing-place. And then, the Franklin hotel porters will, of course, offer their services, and ere midday, my dear, I shall, I doubt not, be safely reunited, not to Major Allen Barnaby, but to the reverend Mr. O'Donoghough.”

“Excellent, perfect, and worthy of yourself!” exclaimed the

major. "But the leather labels bearing our names at full length on the boxes?"

"They will be all lost, my dear, before we get to the Franklin hotel."

No single circumstance of this admirably arranged plan went wrong. Mrs. Allen Barnaby had exactly time enough for all she had to do before the eleven o'clock boat was announced. Tornorino and Patty were made to be perfectly *au fait* of the scheme; the bill, though a high one, was paid without a murmur, and the only recollection of the party that remained at the Washington hotel was, that they were a set of English spendthrifts, who drank champagne unaccountable, but made no bones about paying for it.

CHAPTER XLII.

THERE certainly are some people, who either from fortune, or temper, or the influence of both united, seem to swim down the stream of life more gaily than others. Such persons, it is true, will often keep their colours flying, long after fainter spirits would strike, which may often, perhaps, give them the appearance of being more triumphant than they really are; but if this be sometimes delusive, at any rate it has often the effect of imposing upon the parties themselves, and may perhaps not unfrequently produce that mad sort of luxury which, as the poet tells us, none but mad-men know.

Considering the nature of the adventures through which the Barnaby race had passed since their arrival in the United States of America, and the species of catastrophe with which nearly every adventure had concluded, they could scarcely have enjoyed themselves so vehemently as they certainly did at the Franklin hotel, upon Lake Erie, had not their spirits been excited by some portion of the sort of laughing gas above alluded to. The supper at the Washington had been delightfully full of fun, frolic, triumph, and glee; and the dinner at the Franklin was, if possible, more brilliant still. Nobody, unless it had been Asmodeus himself, could have looked upon the group there assembled, and have doubted their being in the possession of some especial cause for rejoicing and merriment.

The harmony that reigned among them seemed as perfect as the contentment; and in short, a merrier party could not easily have been found. Patty, indeed, was a little in the dark as to the nature of the scrape from which her "pap" had just escaped; but

this only added to the jocularly of the rest, as she never alluded to the cleverness of her mamma, in managing so beautifully to prevent her papa's being hanged, without eliciting a most cordial burst of laughter from the major and the lady, and a charming simper of answering applause from her Don. But time wore away, and as the hours rolled on towards nine o'clock, Major Allen Barnaby hinted, with an amiable apology to the family group, for marring their mirth by drawing their attention to business, that it would be necessary, or at least prudent, to decide upon where they were to go, and what they were to do next, before going on board.

As he said this very gravely, the effect of it was rather to increase than mar their mirth, for Patty laughed immoderately, and declared that when "pap" put on a preaching face, in addition to his preaching garments, the fun was just perfect.

Whereupon the major, in order to prove his unabated good humour, and the reality of his reluctance to substitute business for fun, stood up, and placing the back of his chair before him to represent the front of a pulpit, he began, amidst shouts of applause from Patty and her mamma, to show them how he intended to preach. After devoting a few minutes, however, to this capital joke, he resumed his seat, and renewed his request that the subject of their next campaign might be taken into consideration.

"Where, for instance," he asked, "where are you to be, all of you, while I am performing the part of a travelling minister at Sandusky?"

"Where," repeated Patty. "Where should we be, my darling papa, but close to you, and hearing you preach to be sure."

"This would be the pleasantest scheme for me, my dear Patty, there can be no doubt of that," replied the major. "But I question whether it would be the safest."

"Because of the danger of my laughing, pa? Is that what you mean? If it is, you are just a goose for your pains," said his daughter, "for as I told you before, you shan't come to be hanged, if I can help it; and I'll be bound for it that if you give us a fair trial, mamma will be quite as likely to start off laughing, when you begin to preach, as I should."

"Thank you, my dear Patty, for caring so much about my safety," replied her father, politely kissing her hand, "But I am afraid, Patty, that it is not your laughing, or your mother's either, that will constitute the danger of our being together."

"I fancy not, indeed!" cried Mrs. Allen Barnaby, eagerly. "What can you be thinking off, child, to talk such nonsense? A pretty way it will be for him to remain unknown, to have you, and I, and Tornorino following him about?"

"Alas!" rejoined the major, tenderly, "no man wishing to escape observation, must travel with such handsome faces!"

"And that's true, Mr. Pap, I don't deny it," said the young beauty, with a well-pleased smile. "But what will you do with

us, then? Must we set off without you, as we did when we went to the Springs?"

"Exactly so, Madame Tornorino," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, with decision.

"Indeed, I am afraid that so it must be," quoth the major; "but it will only be necessary to make the separation long enough to insure my being pretty generally known by sight at Sandusky, as the Rev. Mr. O'Donagough. This will, you know, effectually prevent my being traced thither as Major Allen Barnaby, and it is to this device that I must trust for my security during my future wanderings through this comical country. Having thus thrown out my amiable friend, Mr. Gabriel Monkton, I shall have no doubts or fears whatever about rejoining you; and the only question is, as to where this reunion, so greatly wished for by me, shall take place."

"The first thing to consider in settling that point," said Mrs. Allen Barnaby, "is how we can, with the least danger of meeting any one whom we desire to avoid, draw gradually nearer and nearer to the coast; for I confess that, notwithstanding all the wonderful success we have met with, I shall be most excessively rejoiced to feel myself once more on the highway towards Europe. I don't care a straw about going back to England; but I certainly do long to be in Europe once more."

"And in Europe once more, my dear, you most certainly shall be before you are a year older, provided, that is to say, that you do not get tired of my company, and clope in the interval with some such fascinating individuals as Mr. Gabriel Monkton, Mr. John Williams, Mr. Colonel Beauchamp, or Mr. Judge Johnson. As for myself, I honestly avow that I have had quite enough of—'Well, and what may you be called?' and 'Where do you calculate you are going,' and 'What location did you fix in last?' I won't deny that I am tired to death of it all. But I have no great fancy for England either, just at present at least; and so if we are all agreed, I expect, as the darlings say, that our pleasantest plan will be to make for Havre-de-Grace, and from thence to Paris. Afterwards, perhaps, we may vary the scene again, by visiting Baden-Baden, you know, Tornorino. There are a thousand pleasant places we may go to, provided we can get off from these confounded States without having our wings clipped."

"And that I will engage for your doing, without let or hindrance," said his wife, "if you don't get tired of preaching too soon, Donny. I got a good deal of information about the western country at the Springs, and that it was, I believe, which first put the notion of your turning preacher into my head. Miss Wigly (that was the name of my principal friend at the Springs) Miss Wigly told me that it was quite past belief how a tolerably good-looking man would be followed in any one of the western towns, if he did but make noise enough. Now I don't think anybody can

deny, major, that you are rather more than *tolerably* well-looking still, though I won't say you are quite as handsome as when I first saw you at Clifton; and as for making a noise, as she calls it, if you have but the will, I am sure you will find the way."

"A thousand thanks for all your charming compliments, my dear," replied the major. "Trust me, it shall not be from want of exertion that I will fail. But what else did you learn from your friend Miss Wigly? I think it will be quite as well not to make any particular inquiries here about the country beyond Sandusky. There is no occasion whatever that we should leave a plan of our route behind us. Did the lady mention any considerable towns westward?"

"Oh, mercy, yes!" returned his wife; "more than I can remember, a great deal. But I have a sort of general idea about the way we have got to go, and of the principal towns we must pass, in order to get round again to the sea; for that you know is what we must do before we can set off according to the major's beautiful new plan."

"Most certainly, my dear," he replied, "we must get round again, as you call it, to the sea. But there is more than that to be thought of. We have got to make up our minds as to which port will be most agreeable to us. I don't think I should particularly like either New York, Philadelphia, or New Orleans. However, there are many others to choose from; but we need not trouble ourselves about that now. Let us get fairly off to the 'wild west,' as some of them call it, and we can settle about the port to sail from afterwards."

"To be sure we can," answered his wife, "and you may be sure of something else, too, and that is, if you will go on, dressed as you are now, and let us call all ourselves O'Donagough, we may go safe and sound anywhere. No living soul will ever find us out, particularly if we take care not to stay too long."

"My gracious! how you talk, mamma!" cried Patty, staring at her. "Do you fancy that because pap happened to fight a duel at New York, like an honourable, brave gentleman as he is, that we are all to be hunted through the country, as if we were wild beasts, with a pack of dogs at our heels?"

The rest of the party exchanged looks upon this very sensible question, and it seemed for a moment as if nobody chose to answer it; but at length Major Allen Barnaby replied—

"Nothing can be more natural than your observation, my dear Patty; but the fact is, that the government of the United States is very remarkable upon this point. The horror in which they hold duelling is so great, that all the States have agreed together, to punish with sudden and prompt vengeance, any individual who has been guilty of it, let him have committed it where he may. However, I rest with entire confidence on the opinion of your mother, as to the safety insured by the change of name and appearance, and

I really think that once out of this part of the country, we may make our way to the coast by whatever course may eventually appear the most agreeable to us."

"Well, then, that's all settled," cried my heroine, gaily, "and there is only one more question to be asked before we make ourselves ready for starting. Where are we to perch ourselves while the reverend major establishes his reputation as a preacher at Sandusky?"

"Upon my word, my dear, it is a question that I think you must answer yourself; for, thanks to your Miss Wigly, it seems evident that you know more about that part of the country than I do," replied the major.

"Well then," she replied with decision, "I vote for our pushing on to Pittsburg at once, because I know that is one of the places at which we may conveniently decide whether we will go to New Orleans or not. It would be, certainly, by far the most convenient; for Miss Wigly told me it was all by water, and monstrous cheap; and the other way, we should have to cross over some tiresome high mountains which would cost double as much."

"Good; that, then, will be the place and the time for deciding our port of embarkation. Yes, Pittsburg shall be your quarters till I rejoin you," said the major, "which will be, I should hope, in about ten days or a fortnight."

This ended the discussion; and till the steamboat was announced the party amused themselves by imagining the vexation of Mr. Gabriel Monkton on arriving at Sandusky, and finding the bird he was in pursuit of flown.

Had any doubts rested on the minds of Major and Mrs. Allen Barnaby, as to the advantages likely to arise from the reassumption of the respectable attire which had been first adopted at Brighton, the very first specimen of their reception on board the boat would have removed them.

Though the day had been bright and warm, the evening air on the lake was already cold and chilling, and my heroine and her daughter almost immediately descended to the ladies' cabin in search of warmth and shelter. Even before they moved from the gallery, however, the warmth-loving Tornorino had escaped to the smoky sanctuary of the gentlemen's saloon, so that when the ladies moved, Major Allen Barnaby, or rather Mr. O'Donagough, would have been left alone, had he not moved with them. He therefore did so, watching with his usual attention the steps of his charming Patty, whose peculiar style of galloping movement on all occasions, made the operation of descending cabin stairs somewhat dangerous. Ere she reached the door at the bottom, however, which as it was open, displayed a considerable number of females within, she suddenly stopped, exclaiming—

"Oh, goodness, papa! Get up stairs again as fast as you possibly can. Do you know, we were told at the Springs, that it

was not at all safe for a gentleman to go into the ladies' cabin after it was the least bit dark; for that if they did, they were very often soused over head and ears with water, and sometimes made wet to their skin, before they could get away."

This advice being given without any mitigation of the speaker's usually well-sustained voice, it reached the ears of two ladies, who at that moment occupied the doorway; and the light of the ample lamp above it, darting its rays at the same moment, full upon the comely shaven face, cropped gray hair, and sable suit of the major, they were both instantly seized with a fit of compunction at the idea, that so reverend-looking a gentleman should suppose it possible that, among "American females," he should run any risk of being subjected to the discipline sometimes resorted to, in order to keep persons of a far different stamp in order.

Full of praiseworthy feeling, the eldest of the two ladies exclaimed, "Oh my! Pray, miss, don't say that to the gentleman, as if what you describe was intended for such as him! It would be twenty times more likely, sir," she added, making the respectable-looking gentleman a low courtesy, "ay, sir, fifty times more likely, I expect, that every female present should quit and be off to the deck to make place to a gentleman of your appearance, than do by you what the young lady mentions. But I calculate she is a stranger in these parts."

Nothing could be better timed than this amiable and conciliating address; for it not only gave cheering evidence of the perfect success of Mrs. Allen Barnaby's happily-imagined project, but most fortunately reminded the principal actor in it of his cue, which, to say truth, he had utterly forgotten, and had not the warning voice reached him at that identical moment, he would have replied to his daughter's speech in a manner which might have very nearly neutralised the effect of his appearance. As it was, however, all went well.

The major was far from being a slow man, and too much depended upon his own adroitness on the present occasion for him not to rally his powers in an instant, so as to perform the part his admirable wife had allotted him, in a manner to do him as well as herself infinite honour. Great indeed would have been the shock to her nerves, if he had *not* done so, for she was on the stair behind him, and her noble bosom heaved with anxiety as she awaited his reply to the words above recorded. But she had no cause to fear; his words were appropriate, but his manner was better still.

"May you meet the reward you deserve, dear lady, for feelings which do you so much honour," he said. "I will not abuse this most exemplary feeling; but if it be shared, as I trust it is, by the amiable-looking group I see behind you, I will enter amongst you with pleasure for a short interval, hoping that my presence may do more good than harm."

The meekness of this reply was exceedingly touching, from the

modesty, the humility, and gentleness of its tone, and it instantly received the reward it deserved ; for no less than six females more, all of them young, and for the most part well-looking, pressed forward to second the invitation of the first speaker.

The only one indeed, who was neither the one nor the other, was the only one also who did not appear to share the general enthusiasm. She kept herself very decidedly apart from the group that now pressed round the reverend Mr. O'Donagough, very much after the manner of bees round honey, nor did she open her lips at all, till the stewardess came in to complete her arrangements for the night, and to her she certainly took the liberty of addressing a few observations, but not in a tone sufficiently loud to prevent the eager conversation still going on among the rest of the party from continuing as uninterruptedly as if she had not spoken at all.

"I guess," said one pretty young lady, about seventeen years of age, "that so kind and pious a gentleman as you seem to be, sir, won't take it amiss if one of the sisters of the Needle Steeple congregation of Sandusky takes the liberty of asking your name?"

"Instead of a liberty, my dearest young lady, I can only look upon it as a beautiful proof of a lovely Christian spirit, seeking fellowship and brotherhood with the godly," replied the reverend Mr. O'Donagough.

"Indeed, sir," responded the fair sister, "I calculated that you would just say that, or else I'm sure I wouldn't have spoken for the world. Thanks to my pastors and masters, I know my duty better than to put in my oar out of place. And what is your name then, sir?"

Our major was at this moment in imminent danger of exchanging a glance with his wife, so greatly amused was he at perceiving that notwithstanding the decided evangelical tendency of his fair fellow-passenger, the national catechism still evidently superseded all others in her thoughts. But luckily he remembered what he was about, and in such time too, that the profane smile was perfectly well converted into everything he wished to make it, and he replied in the very best manner possible—

"My name, my dear young lady, is O'Donagough. I am called the reverend Mr. O'Donagough."

"Oh my!" exclaimed the charming young creature in return, "I didn't for a single moment doubt your being the reverend, that would have been a sin indeed, that I should have had to confess at the next meeting of the sisters. In course, sir, you have heard tell of the Needle Steeple congregation of Sandusky? I believe our congregation is pretty well known by this time in most parts of the world."

"It would be an ignorance of which I might justly be ashamed, my dear young lady, had I not heard of it; but I rejoice to say that it is long since I first became acquainted with the admirable society

to which you allude. Not personally, indeed, that is a happiness to which I am still looking forward with all the eagerness of hope; but it is long since the Needle Steeple congregation of Sandusky has been known to me by the voice of fame."

"My! Isn't it a pleasure and a reward, Mrs. Tomkins, to hear ourselves spoken of in this way by such a pious gentleman, from over the sea too, as 'tis plain enough he is by his way?" said the young lady, clasping her hands thankfully.

"I am sure, Miss Vanderpuff, I feel it to be so, from the very top of my head to the soles of my feet, and I am thankful for the privilege of conversing with the like. It may not be that impossible, sir," continued Mrs. Tomkins, addressing the major, with a most engaging look of affectionate humility, "indeed, I can't say that I see it should be at all improbable, but what you crossed the water just on purpose to have a look at us. Our revivals are talked of far and near, *that* we all know for a certainty, and our camp-meetings have been taken as a pattern and example for miles and miles."

"My dear ladies," replied the Rev. Mr. O'Donagough, pressing both his hands firmly upon his heart, and raising his eyes with great fervour to the ceiling of the cabin, "my dear ladies, it is difficult for me to express my feelings at this moment! This lucky chance, this happy, thrice happy accident, inspires me with a degree of joy and thankfulness that I have no language adequately to express. Your conjecture is perfectly correct, my excellent Mrs. Tomkins. I *did* indeed leave my native land for the express purpose of becoming personally acquainted with the Needle Steeple congregation of Sandusky, in the delightful hope that by the most indefatigable attention on my part to its principles, and all the precious regulations respecting it, I might be enabled to carry home with me, to my own dear, but comparatively benighted country, such hints of holiness and morsels of mercy as might enable me to purify and enlighten my own beloved congregation so as to make them become to Great Britain what the Needle Steeple congregation of Sandusky has become to the United States of America. Think, then, dear ladies," he continued, "think what must be my feelings at finding myself thus in the very midst of those for whose sake I have toiled and tossed across the wide Atlantic!"

"It is indeed a most providential blessing, sir," said a third lady, coming forward and placing herself, with her hands crossed before her, immediately opposite to him. "I am Mrs. General Pedmington, of Mount Lebanon, and these two sisters of the congregation will be able, I expect, to give you very satisfactory reasons for thinking that if you indeed seek to make yourself acquainted with the Needle Steeple and its dependencies, you were pretty tolerably in the right path, when you happened to fall in with me."

"Oh, my! I expect that you are, indeed!" exclaimed Miss Vanderpuff; "isn't he, Mrs. Tomkins?"

"Indeed, sir, and that's what you are," returned the lady thus appealed to. "Mrs. General Pedmington is the very tiptop of the congregation in all respects, and has sat in the front row of the anxious benches for these two years past."

"And it is she, sir, who gives up at Mount Lebanon (and a right down beautiful place it is, too) the very largest and holiest of parties throughout the Revivals. It is a privilege just to be present at one of them. I am sure no person of good judgment would ever wish to make one in a worldly-minded party afterwards."

"A privilege, indeed!" returned the major, with a deep drawn sigh; "I know of none in any country that I should value so highly."

"Then, in course, sir, you ought to be one of us, and such. I hope you will be, Mr. O'Donagough; that, sir, I think is your name?"

Mr. O'Donagough bowed, and looked deeply grateful.

"Well then, sir, when we reach our place of destination, I hope we shall become better acquainted. My residence, as these ladies have told you, is Mount Lebanon, and when you have fixed yourself at your boarding-house, or hotel, as the case may be, you shall be pleased to send me up your address, and I will take care that one or two of our ministers shall wait upon you, and then we will fix an evening for meeting the sisters and a few clerical individuals at my house."

This open and decided patronage on the part of Mrs. General Pedmington induced the other professing ladies of the company to take courage, and come forward from behind the bed-curtains, where they had concealed themselves on the entrance of the reverend gentleman; and one or two among them even ventured to put into his hand some little tracts, without which, as we all know, such ladies never travel, so that in the course of a few minutes the major found himself the centre of a circle which effectually hemmed him in, and rendered his withdrawing himself from the forbidden precincts where this scene took place, a matter of very great difficulty.

While all this interesting conversation was going on in one part of the little cabin, Mrs. Allen Barnaby and her fair daughter took refuge in another, and that at the farthest possible extremity from the scene of action.

My heroine's motive for thus withdrawing herself was one which at every period of her life, and under all variety of circumstances, had ever maintained too strong and active a hold upon her mind to be ever entirely laid aside or forgotten. Personal comfort and the best accommodation for the coming night, which the actual state of things permitted, occupied her completely during the inter-

val which the major was employing with so much energy in propitiating the favour of his new friends. But the circumstances in which Madame Tornorino found herself were totally different from those of either of her parents. At this period she had but one sole object in view, which was to conceal the irresistible fit of laughter which seized upon her, on hearing her father make the various speeches recorded above. Under any other circumstances whatever, the unscrupulous Patty would have laughed out, without caring a single farthing whether "pa" and "ma" were angry or pleased.

But the notion which she had got into her head, that her father was in very considerable danger of being hanged, and certainly would be if discovered to be Major Allen Barnaby, instead of the reverend Mr. O'Donagough, really terrified her greatly, and she never in her life had exerted herself so strenuously to overcome any feeling as she now did to check her ill-timed mirth; but it was all in vain. Totally unused to restraint of any kind, she was quite unable to control her rebellious muscles, and after a long and violent struggle, finally broke out into one of the most vociferous paroxysms of laughter that was ever heard, just as her father, urged by his success up to the very enthusiasm of perfect acting, stretched out his hands right and left to receive the offered tracts, with a smile, which many besides Patty might have found it difficult to withstand.

The effect of this sudden explosion was startling, and might have been fatal, but for the admirable presence of mind of the major. No instant was lost by him in doubting what the sound might be, or what the cause of it, nor did it take him longer to decide how this alarming *contretemps* should be met.

The effect of this tremendous burst of merriment was not more startling to himself than to those who stood around, each meekly meditating how best to display before the eyes of so holy a gentleman their own particular and individual holiness. As the unexpected sound burst upon their ears, they one and all stood with staring eyes, raised hands, and open mouths, as if they had each been touched by an enchanter's hand, and were rapidly passing from flesh and blood to stone.

"Oh my! what's that?" cried Miss Vanderpuff, actually trembling from head to foot.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" groaned good Mrs. Tomkins; "it is right down awful to hear it; for as sure as the sun is in heaven, it is neither more nor less than somebody just laughing at us."

"And if it is, Mrs. Tomkins," observed the stately Mrs. General Pedmington, with a withering frown, "what is that to us? Are we still so unworthy of our election as to tremble before the idiot roar of a scoffer?"

"But, ma'am, 'tis the very lady he brought down?" screamed another sister, whose eye following the direction of the sound,

caught sight of the unlucky Patty's showy dress, peeping from behind the curtain of one of the little beds, in which she had endeavoured to hide herself.

"Possible?" cried another, looking at the major with an altered eye, and appearing to shudder, as if seized with an ague fit.

"Possible!" screamed a third.

"Possible!" echoed a fourth.

Alas, poor *Major*! How stood he the while?

In reply to this but too intelligible demand, as to the possibility of his being in any way connected with this irreverent laughter, he looked around him with an eye expressive of such profound melancholy, that ere he had spoken a single word in his own defence, his cause was already half gained. But he did not do his tongue such injustice as to trust only to his eye, although that expressive organ was again called upon to aid him ere he spoke, for drawing a white handkerchief from his pocket, he pressed it to the upper part of his face, and by a slightly convulsive movement about the shoulders, might be supposed for several minutes to be weeping bitterly. No men in the world weep so much as the itinerant preachers of America; and this yielding to the weakness in their military disciple was a fine trait of acute observation. Having recovered himself, however, from this first paroxysm of emotion, he said—

"Pity me, my friends, pity the misery of an unhappy father, whose only child has made herself the wife of a Catholic, and then poisoned the dreadful shaft thus hurled at the very tenderest point of his heart, by giving way to ribald merriment, such as you have just listened to whenever she hears the voice of evangelical holiness from any one. Oh! what are the tortures of that inquisition which her new faith teaches her to venerate, compared to what she now inflicts upon me?"

It is perfectly impossible to conceive a more touching scene than that which followed this confidential avowal. The five sisters of the Needle Steeple congregation, with the distinguished Mrs. General Pedmington at their head, vied with each other in demonstrating the tender commiseration to which this disclosure had given birth. Sighs, groans, broken sentences, and copious tears, all bore witness to their amiable feelings.

"And your lady, sir?" said Mrs. General Pedmington, making a gulping effort to overcome her emotion, and speak distinctly "your lady—how does she conduct herself in this trying case?"

"Alas, madam! alas! I have no comfort there," was the melancholy reply. "She is within hearing, ma'am, though she has crept into yonder bed, and affects to be sleeping, but however much I may suffer for it afterwards, I will not shrink from avowing to such ears as yours, the terrible fate that has fallen upon me. Alas! I am a lonely and most desolate man! having a wife, yet no

wife! having a daughter, and yet being worse than childless! Dear, excellent ladies, I have now opened my whole heart to you, and the comfort of it is great, for I know you will pity me!"

Peculiarly affectionate and endearing as are the manners and feelings of such ladies as the sisters of the Needle Steeple congregation to all persons belonging to their sect, it is a fact, exceedingly obvious to an accurate observer, that no instances of worldly misfortune elicit so much ardent compassion and sympathy among them as matrimonial differences of opinion. This peculiar species of charity was particularly evident on the present occasion, though each of the pitying ladies, as she threw a heart-broken sort of glance on the unfortunate gentleman, felt determined to check all verbal expression of her feelings for the present, in consequence of the close proximity of his uncongenial wife.

This feeling, indeed, was so general among them that the only words uttered audibly, were from the lips of Mrs. General Pedmington, and merely consisted of this cautious phrase, "At a future opportunity, sir, I trust we may meet again."

At this moment the stewardess entered, and the solitary lady passenger, who, as related above, had not joined in making the major free of the cabin, addressed her with some asperity, saying—

"If you knew your business, mistress, I expect I should not be kept out of my berth, when I want to get into it, by having the ladies' cabin turned into a chapel. If you won't turn that male passenger out, I must go and find the captain, that's all."

It will readily be believed that the intrusion of Major Allen Barnaby into the ladies' cabin, did not continue long after this hint. He just paused to give one circular glance of grateful acknowledgment to the fair friends he left there, and then sprang up the narrow stairs with the activity of fifteen.

When the passengers were disembarking on the following morning, the major took care to be on the gangway for the purpose of offering his hand to the ladies of the Needle Steeple congregation as they stepped across the plank; a civility which was graciously received by them all, and in the case of Mrs. General Pedmington, rewarded by a whispered renewal of the invitation to Mount Lebanon.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ON reaching the first good-looking hotel near the landing-place, the reverend Mr. O'Donagough entered it, and immediately ordered the best rooms they had, especially mentioning, with much solemnity, the necessity of a quiet and undisturbed sitting-room.

"In course, sir," replied the landlady (for luckily for the major, it was a landlady and not a landlord, to whom he had addressed himself), "in course, sir, I know my duty to a gentleman such as you too well, not to take care of that."

And sure enough the landlady did show them into a particular snug and quiet room, at the greatest possible distance from the noisy bar, and with so long a passage leading to it that it really seemed as if it had been built on purpose for seclusion. Having entered this room sedately, one by one, closed the door, and listened for a minute to the briskly retreating steps of the busy landlady, the major, his wife, and daughter, simultaneously threw themselves into three chairs, and forthwith indulged in such an unmitigated peal of laughter, as to make the startled and perplexed Tornorino look as if he thought they were all seized with a sudden fit of insanity. Nor did the observing this either induce or enable them to moderate their mirth, but perhaps had rather a contrary effect; and no wonder, for it is impossible to conceive a much more ludicrous contrast than that offered by the grave and weary-looking Don, and his laughter-shaken companions. At length, however, the convulsion passed, and then amidst the mutual compliments which were exchanged upon the perfect performance of the gentleman, the admirably discreet forbearance of his wife, together with a few gentle reproaches to Patty upon her dangerous want of self-control, the mystery was explained, and Tornorino made to understand all that had happened.

Another gay supper followed this triumphant recital of the clever scene; when it was agreed on all sides, that with such an admirable talent, and such brilliant success in the use of it, the major owed it to himself and his family to turn it to greater profit than merely throwing dust enough in the eyes of Mr. Gabriel Monkton, to puzzle him as to his identity.

"Upon my honour, Donny, you must make these ladies pay for your preaching, or I shall not be satisfied," said my heroine.

The major looked roguishly at her in return, and said—

"I am not sure, my Barnaby, but that you may be perfectly right as to the possibility of my making these exemplary females contribute a few dollars to the expenses of this particularly pleasant journey. But before you set me upon it, dear wife, let me beg you to remember that a good deal of sisterly and brotherly love-making must, in all human probability, take place before the result you anticipate can be looked for. Will not your fond heart feel some tender alarms, my dear, during your widowed residence at Pittsburg, knowing that I am thus employed at Sandusky?"

This sally produced a fresh burst of laughter, and Mrs. Allen Barnaby replied in admirable mock-heroic—

"Unquestionably, my love, I shall pine and I shall languish; nevertheless, such is my devotion to the common cause, that I will endure it all, rather than risk the loss of a single dollar, or," gracefully suiting the action to the word, "forfeit a single drop of this sparkling glass of champagne."

* * * * *

It is now absolutely necessary that the narrative should retro-

grade a little for the purpose of affording the reader a glimpse at some of the other personages introduced in it ; and as my only real and legitimate heroine is at this time suspended, as it were, from all action, while awaiting at Pittsburg, the arrival of her husband from Sandusky, the present opportunity is particularly favourable for the purpose.

* * * * *

It is to be hoped that the kind and courteous reader remembers the position of affairs at Big-Gang Bank, at the time the Allen Barnaby party quitted it ; and also the scene which followed between our young English friend Egerton, and his umwhile hospitable entertainers. The result of this was his immediately leaving the house, but not the neighbourhood ; for, as may be likewise remembered, he had, while uttering his farewell to his particular friend, Miss Louisa Perkins, contrived to arrange an assignation with her for the evening at the house of Mrs. Clio Whitlaw.

Hurried as was the moment in which this arrangement was settled, he had contrived to make the worthy Louisa understand that this evening meeting would not be quite perfect unless the fair Annie were made a party to it. It must certainly have been owing to the experience which the elder Miss Perkins had gained in love matters, by having been a looker-on upon the great variety of such affairs in which the heart of her sister had been concerned, that she so immediately comprehended the state of the case respecting Annie Beauchamp and Mr. Egerton. Most certain it is, that they neither of them had ever breathed to her a single syllable explanatory of the state of their respective hearts, and yet the worthy spinster felt as certain of their being exceedingly in love with each other, as if she had been the confidant of both, from the first hour of their acquaintance to the last. In this respect, indeed, she had greatly the advantage of them, for although each by this time had a pretty tolerably clear idea of the truth respecting his or her own particular heart, they neither of them dared to believe that he or she had made any impression on the heart of the other. But although Miss Louisa felt as sure as sure could be, that the attachment was equal and mutual, she was not such a blundering agent as to hint this belief to her young friend, when she proposed to her the walk to Portico Lodge ; she did not, indeed, even mention the name of Mr. Egerton ; and whether Miss Beauchamp had overheard any part of the whisper by which the arrangement was made, it was impossible for Miss Louisa to guess, for the subject was never even alluded to between them. But, however this may be, the young lady made no objection to the proposal of the elder one, and they set off, arm-in-arm together, leaving the colonel and his wife expatiating to Miss Matilda upon the extraordinary virtue and talent of Mrs. Allen Barnaby, and the scandalous conduct of her young countryman, Mr. Egerton.

The two walking ladies were, perhaps, about equally well

pleased to escape hearing this, and the satisfaction of having done so, brought a smile to the melancholy face of poor Annie; but it quickly passed away, for her heart was heavy and sad, and she moved on in total silence, feeling that if her very life had depended upon her talking, it would have been impossible. The good Louisa, however, seemed to understand all about it, and walked on beside her without uttering a sound that might interrupt her pretty companion's reverie.

Having thus reached in silence the entrance of Mrs. Whitlaw's domain, Miss Louisa stopped and looked about her. Annie coloured violently, but she stopped also, but it was only for an instant, for as if some thought had arisen in her mind leading her to disapprove this delay, she suddenly moved forward again, and with a much quicker step than before. But ere she reached the little gate through which they were to pass into Mrs. Whitlaw's shrubbery, Frederic Egerton stood before them.

Annie Beauchamp did not faint, although she became as pale as alabaster, and so strongly agitated was the young man also, that till Miss Perkins broke the silence, not a word was spoken. She did not, however, watch their embarrassment long without doing her very best, good soul, to remove it.

"I see how it is, my dear young friends," she said, "as plainly as if I was in both your hearts. What has happened this morning is certainly very unlucky for you both, but if I leave you by yourselves to talk it over, I hope and trust you will think upon something or other to set it all right again."

Egerton gave one look of gratitude to his kind ally, who instantly stepped forward, and then seizing the hand of Annie, he hastily exclaimed—

"Forgive this most involuntary abruptness, dearest Miss Beauchamp! Drive me not from you, as I was driven from your house this morning, but believe that if my respect, my reverence, equalled not my love, I should not thus implore you to be my wife in the only moment, and in the only manner that is left me."

There was a something (it is impossible to describe what) in the eyes of Annie as she raised them to the face of Egerton as he spoke, that seemed to save him from despair, though her first act (except looking at him) was to withdraw her hand; and her first words to say—

"If indeed you thus love me, Mr. Egerton, you will instantly overtake Miss Perkins, and bring her back to me."

It is possible that some young ladies might have spoken such words under similar circumstances, without either intending or expecting that they would or should be obeyed. But there is an intonation in the accents of truth, which when heard by ears intent upon discovering the exact meaning of what they listen to, cannot easily be misunderstood.

Egerton had left the side of his beloved, and had taken the hand

of Miss Perkins, in order to make her break in upon the *tête-à-tête*, which he would have given years of life to prolong, in less time, perhaps, than it had ever taken him before to bound over an equal space.

"She will not listen to me, my dearest Miss Perkins," said he, "unless you are beside her. Come back with me this moment, I entreat you."

The kind-hearted Louisa did not get over the ground with precisely the same sort of flying movement that Mr. Egerton had done, but she moved as rapidly as she could towards her young friend; and though in the interpretation of her feelings she had not now the advantage of any great experience, from having watched similar emotions in her sister, she seemed, somehow or other, to comprehend that it was possible, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, that poor Annie might be in earnest in wishing to have her back again.

When the trio were thus once more reunited, Annie Beauchamp attempted to say something which doubtless would have been very much to the purpose, but she failed, and instead of speaking, dropped her head upon the shoulder of Louisa, and burst into tears.

"Poor dear child!" exclaimed the gentle spinster. "She was greatly shocked, Mr. Egerton, by what took place this morning, as I dare say you can guess, sir, pretty well, and therefore you know she must not be hurried now."

"Hurried!" cried Egerton, clasping his hands, and fixing his eyes upon the weeping girl, with an air and manner that seemed to say he could be contented to stand thus gazing upon her for ages. "Oh no! she shall not be hurried, Miss Perkins; let her but give me hope for the future, however distant, and she shall see how absolute her power is over me."

Annie raised her head, and fixed her beautiful eyes, all tearful as they were, upon him. The first overwhelming transition from doubting, trembling hope, to delicious certainty was over, and the firm but gentle energy of Annie Beauchamp, immediately displayed itself.

"Not for a knowledge of my sentiments shall you wait, Mr. Egerton," said she; "I have been somewhat over prompt, it may be, in days past, to make you fully comprehend the extent of my prejudices, and I will not be afraid to let you see, that strong as they were, they were not so inveterate as to stand against truth, honour, and generosity. I know nothing of your family or fortune, but I know you, and thus far will I profit by my American freedom. I will promise you, Mr. Egerton, never to be the wife of any other man, so long as it shall continue to be your wish that I should become yours. Nay, nay, you must not thank me thus vehemently," she added, as he seized her hand and covered it with kisses; "for it may be that all I have said, and all I have the power to say, shall mean nothing more than the expression of my gratitude for sentiments so dearly valued, that were my mother and

father willing, I would not deem my whole life too long a space to be employed in proving how very precious they are to me. But, alas! Mr. Egerton, how can we hope, after what has passed this morning, that I can ever be your wife without ceasing to be their child? And this, at once and for ever, let me declare to you, I never will do! I will not give you as a companion for life, a guilty daughter, whose remorse would grow more bitter every day she lived. This I will never do."

"Nor will I ever ask it of you, Annie," replied Egerton, with sincerity equal to her own. "I could not love you as I do, did I not in my very soul believe that you are as good as you are beautiful. But, dearest, I do not despair of obtaining the consent of Colonel Beauchamp, and even of your mother, Annie, angry as she is with me at this moment. I have romance enough about me, I confess, to rejoice at having heard the precious words you have uttered, while you were still ignorant of my fortune and position in the world; and as those dear words are recorded where they will endure as long as life and memory are lent me, I may now tell you freely, that my estate, and the settlement I shall propose to your father, are not such as to offer a reason for his rejecting me. My family is honourable, and very nobly connected; and what I think will weigh far more with you, dearest Annie, than either, I flatter myself I can refer with honest confidence to the guardians who have had charge of me from the death of my father to the time of my coming of age, as well as to Eton and Oxford, where I received my education, for testimony that my actions have hitherto brought no disgrace upon my name."

"Ah, Mr. Egerton," returned Annie, with both a sigh and a smile, "all this would have gone very far yesterday towards obtaining such an answer as you wish. But I fear that as yet you have no idea of the anger conceived against you, both for your unfortunate parley with the slaves in the rice grounds, and your accusations against the husband of that terrible Mrs. Barnaby. Indeed, indeed, I fear that you would not be listened to upon such a subject for a single instant."

"Neither will I venture to ask it, dearest Annie," he replied. "I feel perfectly certain of being able to bring evidence of the truth of all I have said respecting this major, and if I do so, my motives for having warned your father of his practices, must surely be justly appreciated; and as to the other offence imputed to me, a very short time must surely suffice to prove that I have at least done nothing productive of any mischievous result."

"You speak so hopefully, Mr. Egerton," she replied, "that you make me think you must know better about it all than I do. But you will allow that time must be given, both for your inquiry about the major, and for the negative proof of your innocence respecting the poor slaves. But this last imputation will, I doubt not, die away, if they all remain quiet."

"And time shall be patiently given by me, sweet Annie, provided you promise that I may now and then hear from you. Of course I shall leave this place to-night, as it certainly would look like plotting and planning mischief were I to be found lurking here, after the scene of this morning. How I bless the speaking paleness of your fair face, dearest, which gave me courage to ask our kind friend here, for this interview! How different will be my departure now, from what in that first dreadful moment I feared it would have been! And you will write to me, Annie? First addressed to the post-office at New York; for it is thither, as I understand, that my precious countryman has taken himself, and it is thither that I shall immediately follow; but you will write to me, and promise to receive my letters in return?"

Annie looked in the face of Miss Perkins, and would at that moment have given a good deal if the kind feelings she so plainly saw written there, had been more mingled with the tougher quality of good sense. Poor girl! She longed for an English opinion that might have been trusted, as to the propriety of complying with the request of Egerton. To refuse him seemed almost beyond her strength; yet, conscious of her total ignorance of English etiquette in such matters, she shrunk from the idea of consenting to do what was unusual. Egerton saw the struggle, and understood it.

"Are you not my affianced wife, Annie? Conditionally, it is true; but still you are pledged to me. And am I not, still more, your affianced husband? For I have offered my vows unshackled by any condition whatever. Think you, then, that I would ask you to do anything that I would not sanction in my own sister, were I happy enough to have one?"

"I will write to you," said Annie, gently, "if you desire me to do it."

"And will you receive my letters, dearest?" he rejoined, after once again fervently kissing her hand.

"Yes, Mr. Egerton, I will," she replied, with something almost approaching to solemnity in her manner. "But in both cases it must be done by the assistance of Miss Perkins; for it must not be from me that my parents first learn what has passed between us."

It will easily be believed that the good Louisa raised no difficulties upon this point, and Frederic Egerton looked quite as happy as it was possible for a man to do who was on the very eve of parting with his beloved.

All this had passed in a shady and obscure retreat in a rustic summer-house, at no great distance from the entrance to Mrs. Whitlaw's grounds, into which Annie, who knew it well, had almost unconsciously entered, immediately after Miss Perkins had rejoined her. And now she rose to leave it, saying to that excellent person as she did so—

"I cannot visit Mrs. Whitlaw now, Miss Louisa—I should not

comprehend a single word she said to me. Farewell, Mr. Egerton ! " and she held out her hand to him, " Farewell ! "

Before this sad word was uttered between them for the last time, the eyes of the whole party bore witness that they did not separate with indifference ; for on seeing the emotion of her young friends, the tender-hearted Louisa wept for company.

But part they must, and part they did at last ; but not till the lovers had confessed to each other, that despite the obstacles which thus drove them asunder, that hour was the happiest of their lives.

CHAPTER XLIV.

So very little space is left for detailing the last scenes of the Barnabys in America, that they must needs be passed over very lightly. It is hardly necessary, after what the reader knows already, to state that the reception of the reverend Mr. O'Donagough at Mount Lebanon was everything his heart could wish. Young ladies and old, brown ladies and fair, all vied with each other how they best might prove their reverence for his character and admiration for his talents. It is true that the gentlemen of Sandusky, did not put themselves to much trouble to do the honours of the town to the industrious major ; but neither did they, on the other hand, at all interfere to check the hospitalities of the ladies, so that the time he remained there he might truly be said to have been living in clover.

It must be remembered, however, that Major Allen Barnaby, though for particular reasons alone at Sandusky, was not alone in the world—at any rate, he himself never forgot that he had a wife and daughter, whose worldly welfare depended as much upon his exertions in one way, as the unworldly welfare of the serious ladies of the lake did in another ; and it therefore happened, as all persons blessed with an acute perception of character must have foreseen, that he had not remained many days amongst them, before he made it understood that the hand of fortune had been as penurious to him as that of nature had been bountiful.

Were this chapter of his adventures at the beginning of the first volume instead of being at the end of the third, I might be tempted to describe at some length the various ways in which his conjugal and paternal affections acted as siphons upon the female pockets of this amiable inland sea population ; but the time is past for this, and I must therefore content myself with stating that for nearly a month the reverend Mr. O'Donagough lived upon the fattest fat of the Sandusky land, and that seldom a day passed during this period without adding a dollar or two on some pre-

tence or other to his resources. The liberality of Mrs. General Pedmington, indeed, was not restrained to such little offerings as these, for ere he parted she presented her new friend with five hundred dollars for the embellishment of his humble chapel in England, upon condition, affectionately expressed and fully understood, that he should revisit Mount Lebanon before his departure for the old country.

It was not, perhaps, the least agreeable feature of this delightful month, that the major during the course of it had the singular gratification of hearing himself perpetually talked of, described, and condemned to all sorts of pains and penalties, as one of the most audacious swindlers that ever ventured to poach on the native preserves of the Union, while he sat tranquilly by, uttering an occasional "alas!" at the strange depravity of human nature.

At length, however, some feelings of weariness began to creep, like a mildew, over the delights of the Mount Lebanon reunions; not indeed among the charming society to its manners born, but to the stranger, who had first to learn their ways and then to adopt them. It was amidst showers of tears that the sisters of the Needle Steeple congregation took their last reluctant leave of the gentle major, and the judicious tenderness with which he graduated his farewell benedictions to them all, had in it a delicacy of tact, that upon recollection positively surprised himself, and caused him to exclaim as so many have done before him, "No man knows what he is capable of performing till he tries."

Can it be doubted that the meeting with his family at Pittsburg was delightful? Or that Mrs. Allen Barnaby was rewarded with more than one glass of her favourite wine, for having so long and so patiently endured the absence of her beloved husband?

And at Pittsburg, as before decided, they took into consideration the comparative advantages of risking returning for a few days to New Orleans, or its neighbourhood, which could be done with perfect convenience by water, or of travelling across the Alleghany mountains to Baltimore for the purpose of embarking for Europe. Against the first, there was the danger of the major's being recognised as the hero of the Big-Gang Bank festivities. Against the last, was the expense and fatigue of a long land journey, with the doubt whether the major would be much safer there than at New Orleans.

Patty, whose fears from discovery were of a considerably graver nature than those of the rest of the party, protested strongly against returning to New Orleans, declaring that though "pap" did sometimes put her into dreadful passions by being so stingy of his money to her and the Don, she did not want to have him hanged. Few ladies, on the whole, could be less victims of delicate sensibility than my beautiful bride, yet nevertheless, she now exhibited considerable feeling, for upon her mother saying that she thought

they would be all safe at New Orleans if they did but take a little care, and put up at the further end of the town from Mrs. Carmichael's boarding-house, she burst out upon her with great vehemence, and declared that she believed in her heart that she was looking forward to being a widow again, and making conquests.

The major was a good deal touched by this testimony of his daughter's affection, but being himself very strongly in favour of the New Orleans scheme, he told her, after a hearty hug, that he was excessively obliged to her for her kindness, and that the fear of vexing her if anything went wrong with him, would be as likely to make him careful as the dread of the gallows itself.

"But if you could have seen me at Mount Lebanon, my darling, you would have been cured at once and for ever of all fears on my account. I really did not know my own powers before, Patty, but now, I declare to you upon my word and honour, I would rather have the fun of bamboozling the natives than not. I would venture to bet five thousand to one against any one of those we saw at New Orleans knowing me again, if I did not choose they should do so. Besides, my dear, I have another word to say in favour of the New Orleans plan. I heard from many people, while I was at Sandusky, that it would be a sin and a shame to leave the country without spending a few weeks at Natchez, which for pleasant amusements and all that" (and here the major gave a sidelong glance of intelligence to his wife and the Don) "is quite New Orleans in miniature. And, moreover, by reposing ourselves there for a little while, it would be easy enough to leave when there was a good vessel going to start for Havre, and our places might be easily secured on board her without our ever making our appearance in the city till the very day she set off. I vote, therefore, for our making our way by the Ohio and the Mississippi to Natchez, and remaining exactly as long as we find it agreeable, and not an hour longer."

This scheme seemed to satisfy all parties, and was accordingly acted upon forthwith. The long river voyage was performed with much less tediousness than any of them expected, for the major and his son-in-law scarcely ever passed an idle hour while they were on board, nor one that was not more or less profitable, for this long line of river travelling is as remarkable for its industrious gambling, as for any other of its agreeable features.

As to Mrs. Allen Barnaby and Patty, they found means to amuse themselves exceedingly well, though they played neither at whist nor piquet. There were several ladies on board, who by asking them, day after day, incessant questions respecting themselves, gave them both such an opportunity of vapouring about their European grandeur as kept them in perpetual good humour, so that they all arrived at Natchez in excellent spirits, and ready to meet whatever adventures might chance to befall them there with sharp wits and sturdy courage.

It took but little time to convince Major Allen Barnaby that the information he had received respecting the social and intellectual advancement of the population of this flourishing little town, was perfectly correct; it realised all his hopes and exceeded all his expectations, so that for rather more than two months that the party remained, he had scarcely a single misadventure or disappointment of any kind to recount to his faithful wife.

This steady current of good fortune, however, only served in the long run to convince him that with his talents and advantages (his son-in-law ranking higher and higher every day among the latter) he could not do himself justice while carrying on business in so small a way. His high-minded wife, also, was most decidedly of the same opinion, and being, moreover, as well as her daughter, heartily tired of the town and everything in it, the feminine influence of the family was put forth with considerable activity; while even the peaceable Tornorino, though exceedingly well pleased by a few well-timed donations from his father-in-law, began to hint now and then, in a gentle murmur, that "*de vin vas not ver good.*"

In a word, their speedy departure was fixed and decided upon a certain evening when little or nothing had been done at the usual place of meeting; and on the following morning the major started alone for New Orleans by an early steamboat, intending to disembark a mile or two above the town, and to proceed early on the following morning direct to the quays, where the large vessels bound to Europe were sure to be found, the costume he assumed for this expedition was that of the reverend Mr. O'Donagough, over which, on leaving his lodging he threw a large cloak to prevent any observations from his neighbours, and quietly walked on board, in all outward respects so utterly unlike the military gentleman who had figured as an East Indian of a large fortune, during his residence at Natchez, that there was certainly very little chance of his being recognised.

While he is prosperously borne by tide and steam towards the place of his destination, we will rapidly follow the fortunes of Mr. Egerton, from the time he left the side of Annie Beauchamp in pursuit of him.

In the first instance he proceeded, in consequence of the information he had received, to New York, and devoted himself most indefatigably to the task of discovering if any such personage as Major Allen Barnaby was to be found there. Not a single hotel, boarding, or lodging-house of tolerable respectability was left unquestioned, and such was the zeal and perseverance, of his perquisition, that had the major been in the city he could scarcely have escaped it. But during the days thus employed, our major and his family were, as the reader well knows, at Philadelphia.

Being at length reluctantly convinced that no Major Allen

Barnaby was to be found there, Mr. Egerton returned to New Orleans, convinced that he had begun his search very unadvisedly in taking it for granted that his slippery countryman was likely to be found where he said he should be, and determined for the future to trace him step by step, on surer evidence than his own word. He ventured not, however, to present himself, at Big-Gang Bank, but obtained from his fair correspondent there, all the particulars she could gather from the slaves who had attended upon the Allen Barnaby party, as to the place to which they had conducted them. To this place he immediately repaired, but though the party as described by him were perfectly well remembered at the principal hotel there, he found it impossible to ascertain with certainty whither they went afterwards. Most of the people of the house declaring that they went to New York, while one or two porters positively stated that their luggage was put on board a vessel going to Philadelphia.

In this dilemma, the young man had recourse to his own judgment as to which was most probable, and although he had already satisfactorily convinced himself that, in the first instance, he certainly did *not* go to New York, he still thought his chance of finding him would be better if he again returned to that city, in the hope of his having visited it subsequently, than waste his time and trouble by going to Philadelphia, knowing enough of the style of its society to be convinced that if the object of his search had really been there he did not stay long.

To New York, therefore, he again repaired, but not till Major Allen Barnaby had left it about four-and-twenty hours. But though he found not him, he found enough concerning him to add proof to conviction as to his character. For here chance favoured him, by sending him upon his arrival to the same house in which the illustrious English family had boarded, and his very first inquiry brought forth from the party at the dinner table where it was made, the most violent burst of indignation against the major, who was declared by the whole company to be the most atrocious swindler that ever lived. Beyond this, however, he gained little information sufficiently authentic to be of any use to him.

He had been traced to the Springs, they said, and clearly recognised as the suspicious individual to whom Mr. Gabriel Monkton had devoted so much attention. But beyond the deck of the steamboat all trace of him was lost; and that how, when, and where he got on shore, no one knew, or, notwithstanding the national propensity, could even venture to guess. Mr. Monkton had declared that he had himself watched every passenger that had left the boat, both at Cleveland and at Sandusky, and that Major Allen Barnaby was most certainly not amongst them. It was, however, the general opinion of the whole party that he had escaped the very active pursuit after him, by travelling "pretty considerable far

west," such being, as they said, the universal custom of all the gentry who had made the "Old States" too hot to hold them.

The evident probability that this was the fact, was a severe disappointment to poor Egerton, who had hoped to return to the house of Colonel Beauchamp with such confirmation of his statement respecting the major, as might have restored the confidence and friendly feeling of himself and wife, in greatly less time than it would take him to reach the "far west," and obtain such legal confirmation of what he had asserted, as could admit of no contradiction or evasion. The news he had of the runaway at New York was, however, such as very satisfactorily to strengthen his hopes of obtaining this could he overtake him, and he therefore once more set forth with no other guide than what was furnished by a list of the various towns through which he was likely to pass, or where he might have been tempted to tarry. This very laborious expedition, however, proved entirely abortive, and at length, weary and desponding, he gave up the chase, and determined upon returning with all speed to New Orleans (where Annie's letters informed him the family would soon be settled for the winter), with no better proof of what he had stated, than the reports he had heard at New York.

Harassed, and out of spirits, Egerton was traversing the galley-walk of the steam-boat that was taking him his last day's voyage towards the place of his destination, when the boat stopped to take in wood and passengers at Natchez. The young man was in no very speculative humour; and though he listlessly bent over the rail as if to watch the comers and goers, he in reality paid but little attention to any of them.

There was one figure, however, which, notwithstanding his abstraction, drew his attention and fixed it. This was a peculiarly nice-looking elderly gentleman, dressed in black, whose whole dress and aspect declared him to be of the clerical profession, and whose remarkable quietness of demeanour offered a strong contrast to the half horse, half alligator population, of which the passengers were almost entirely composed. This venerable personage entered the vessel and moved onward, without looking either to the right or to the left, and in doing so, passed close to Mr. Egerton, but without seeing him. The profile of this respectable gentleman struck Egerton as being very like that of some individual whom he had seen, he knew not where or when, and he followed him with the sort of curiosity which this imperfect kind of recollection always produces.

When the stranger reached the gallery in front of the great cabin, he seated himself for a moment on a sofa that was placed there, and with his hands rather formally crossed upon his breast, lifted his mild eyes and looked about him. In this circular glance he caught sight of Mr. Egerton, and in doing so started, evidently,

at least to the young man himself, whose eye was fixed upon him ; but not sufficiently to attract the attention of any other person.

This involuntary movement on the part of the respectable gentleman in black, naturally attracted a more scrutinising glance from Egerton in return, and then, though the reverend personage was moving away, and that a portion only of his face was visible, he instantly became convinced that he saw before him the man he was seeking. His own mode of proceeding was immediately decided on. The start and the sudden departure showed him both that he was recognised and avoided, and he determined, while strictly keeping watch over him, that he would show no symptom of recollecting their having met before.

At the dinner table, the black-coated gentleman took his place with the rest of the company ; but Egerton while taking care to look around him with an equal air of indifference upon them all, aware that his looks, words, and gestures were carefully watched by the stranger. He felt certain if his *ci-devant* acquaintance perceived that he was known, in spite of his disguise, he would bolt at the first station at which the boat should stop to take in wood for the engine ; but so well did he contrive to look at the man, as if he had never seen him before, that our major (for most surely it was himself) became perfectly reassured, and fully confirmed in the agreeable conviction that when he chose to disguise himself, nobody could find him out. The reverend Mr. O'Donagough therefore (it was thus that his carpet-bag was labelled) continued his voyage to New Orleans, with no further precaution than taking care not to speak within hearing of Mr. Egerton, lest his ear might prove more discerning than his eye.

It was as dark as an American night could well be, when they reached New Orleans, and Egerton, aware that it would be impossible to watch his suspicious fellow-traveller without following him too closely to avoid being watched in his turn, very cleverly enlisted in his service a negro-lad, who had charge of a neatly-ornamented bird-cage, containing a fine mocking-bird, to whom during many hours of the day he had been teaching various tunes. This rather amusing occupation first caused Mr. Egerton to notice him, and the sable youth giving sundry indications of sharp-wittedness in his answers, it struck him that a dollar might be well bestowed in securing his services as a spy. The offer was promptly made and promptly accepted. The reverend Mr. O'Donagough paid no attention whatever to the young slave and his bird-cage, who having seen the parson-gentleman safely housed at an obscure inn, returned swiftly to his employer, who was awaiting him at a well-known hotel near the landing-place.

The diligence and intelligence of the lad induced Egerton to inquire if he could serve him further, and he was readily answered in the affirmative ; the young slave stating that he was the property

of a pretty young lady, who was very good-natured and would not scold him, even if he did stay out of the house a bit now and then.

No arrangement could be more favourable for his purpose, as no agent could be employed less likely to excite suspicion; and accordingly, having paid him in a style very effectually to answer his zealous services, he made the youth understand enough of his object to render them available, and then repaired to the post-office, where, according to promise, he found a letter from Annie.

She told him that their removal to New Orleans was postponed, in consequence of some plantation business, which was to be completed before they left the premises, but that she thought he might venture to pay them a visit, "*if he wished it,*" as both her father and mother had first become affronted, and then suspicious, in consequence of never having received a single line from their dear friend Mrs. Allen Barnaby, from the time she had left them. Moreover, their far-off neighbour, Mr. Hapford, having at length recovered from a violent fit of the gout, had been at the bank and declared his conviction of having been cheated at play by the whiskered Englishman whom he had met there at his last visit.

All this, as Annie gently observed, would greatly lessen the probability of his being rudely received if he came to visit them. His fair correspondent then went on to say, that she thought poor Louisa Perkins, to whom he had always shown so much kindness, was greatly in want of some friend to put her in the way of getting back to England, for that though she and her sister were come again to the Bank, after making a circle of visits among the people who most wished to honour Mrs. Allen Barnaby, it was very evident that her father and mother wanted to get rid of them, and Annie said, she greatly feared they would not much longer delay letting them perceive this, in a manner that it would greatly pain her to witness.

This long letter was read twice through, and then Egerton, having kissed the signature, folded the precious paper carefully, and placed it, like its rather numerous predecessors, under the protection of a Bramah lock, began to meditate upon the difficult problem of how he could set off instantly to obey the summons it contained, yet not lose sight of the major before he could learn a little more concerning him. That of these two apparently incompatible objects, the first was in his estimation the most important, was proved by his instantly ringing for a waiter, and despatching him to secure a place in the next coach that left New Orleans in the direction he wished to go. No such conveyance, however, was to depart till the following morning, and before he went to rest, his black ally inquired for him, and was shown into his room. His report was as follows:—

The parson gentleman was called the reverend Mr. O'Dona-

gough; he was going to Havre; wanted four first-rate berths; and his family at Natchez; should go and fetch them in time to sail; the "Lady Anne," which was the name of the vessel in which he was going, was not to sail for ten days; and finally, the reverend gentleman himself had already started off again in a steamboat for Natchez.

It was impossible any intelligence could be more agreeable. If Colonel Beauchamp still wished for any further information respecting his late honoured guests, there was time enough for the purpose before they sailed, and moreover their young accuser would have the satisfaction of conveying the important intelligence, that they had again thought it convenient to change their name.

Egerton slept soundly, though dreaming all night of Annie, and arrived without delay or accident of any kind, within half an hour's walk of Big-Gang Bank. It was long since Frederic Egerton had experienced emotions of so much happiness as at the moment he set off upon this walk. The letter of Annie had, perhaps, more of shyness and less of love than any of her former ones, but he interpreted this very correctly, and was certainly not the less happy for it.

"Annie fancies," thought he, "that I am already almost in her presence, and must not be spoilt by too much indulgence."

Thus gaily thinking, he went bounding on, and had reached the palings that surround Mrs. Whitlaw's property, which, ardently as he wished to advance with all possible speed, almost induced him to stop that he might gaze upon the objects which had surrounded him when Annie had first promised that she would never be the wife of another.

But the question whether he should pause or not was not left for him to decide, for just as he reached the little gate by which he had formerly entered the premises, Nina, the favourite slave of his beloved, rushed out and seized his arm.

"Thank God, Mr. Egerton," she exclaimed, "I have not watched for you in vain. My mistress is here, Miss Annie is here—come in—come in! You must not go a single step farther towards the Bank."

Delighted to find that Annie was so near, and thinking perhaps that she had come thither, and set her favourite to watch for him, that she might give him some word of advice or instruction before he saw her parents, Egerton followed the rapidly retreating figure of Nina, till he once more found himself in the flowery portico of the good Clio's elegant abode. Notwithstanding the advanced season, the windows were open, and another step placed him before the eyes of Annie Beauchamp.

Though the slave Nina had so evidently expected him, it was equally plain that her young mistress did not, for the agitation of Annie was for a moment too great to permit her speaking; but

tears of emotion were blended with smiles of happiness as she yielded her beautiful hand to his caresses, almost without a struggle. When at length she found her voice, she exclaimed—

“How can it be that I see you here, Mr. Egerton? I confess, I have been hoping for your arrival at the Bank for two days past, but what has made you come here? Have you seen my father?”

“I am right down glad he is here, Annie,” interrupted Mrs. Whitlaw, cordially offering her hand to Egerton. “I saw how it was going on with his heart when he was here before. And what could he do better, Annie, than come here to meet you, and tell you all about it? Perhaps, you know, my dear, he may not be that much at his ease with Madame Beauchamp and the colonel as he might be with you and I.”

Egerton related his meeting with Nina at the gate, and whispered to Annie that she confessed she was waiting for him.

“Silly girl,” exclaimed the young lady, blushing, “I dare say she knew that I was expecting you; but most surely I never told her to waylay you in this strange style, Mr. Egerton.”

“Let not the kind zeal in my service bring reproof on her,” he replied, laughing. “I shall remember it with gratitude, my Annie, as long as I live.”

A very interesting conversation then followed, in which Mr. Egerton narrated his discovery of the disguised major on board the steamboat, which Annie assured him would be more than sufficient to convince her father and mother that he was indeed all that they had been so kindly warned to expect they should find him.

And then followed a discussion, in which Mrs. Whitlaw joined, as to the best mode of Mr. Egerton's presenting himself. Should he accompany Annie home? Should Annie precede him, or should he precede her? She declared that she had not courage to announce his approach; and it was at length agreed that he should proceed to the Bank alone, endeavour to see both her parents, inform them of all he had learned concerning Major Allen Barnaby, and then venture to ask if they considered this as proof sufficient of his being a man of honour. If the answer was favourable, he was to go on to express all his hopes, and ask their consent to his wishes.

Having received the sanction of Annie and her affectionate friend for this, he left them, and had already again reached the little gate which opened from the lawn, and which was not within sight of the house, when once more he was met by Nina. He had observed that she looked hurried and agitated when he first met her, but she was now infinitely more so, and when she found from the direction he took, and the words he said, that he was hastening to Colonel Beauchamp's house, she threw herself on the ground before him, and with tears and sobs implored him to go back.

No room is left me to describe at length the scene which fol-

lowed. Finding that nothing she could say could dissuade Egerton from executing the plan which had been sanctioned by Agnes, she uttered a groan that made him shudder, and exclaimed—

“Then I must break my oath and sacrifice my life for her, and what is dearer to her than herself. If you go to my master’s house, young gentleman, you will be murdered!”

Even after this it was some time before the terrified and reluctant girl could be made to explain herself fully; but at length she confessed, amidst sobs and groans, that the slaves on the colonel’s property, and that of the neighbouring plantation, which belonged to Judge Johnson, were in revolt, and stood bound by a tremendous oath to murder every white person of whatever age or sex that should come across them while in the act of securing whatever portable property of value they could find in either mansion. They had arranged, she said, to escape to the numberless hiding-places known to them in the neighbouring forests, where they could long subsist upon the food they meant to carry with them, and expected finally to get off by means of the money of which they expected to get possession, and because no one would be left alive in either estate to pursue them. To the execution of this wild and horrible project they had all engaged themselves by the most solemn vows; “and rather would they fail and die,” cried the girl, “than live to endure more years of misery.”

Egerton’s first object was to restore the agitated Nina to such a degree of composure as might enable her to tell him how long this scene of horror had been in action, and where she imagined her master and mistress to be.

At length he learned from her, but not without considerable difficulty, that when the oath was first proposed to her, she refused to take it, but was told that if she persevered in this, she would be kidnapped away, and kept a close prisoner till all was over. She then took it, but with the understanding (after long battling for it) that she might save the white females if she could; but that if she attempted to save the life of a white man, she would herself be murdered. She told him also that after prevailing on Miss Annie to pay a visit to Mrs. Whitlaw, she had got Mrs. Beauchamp and the Miss Perkinses into the dairy-house, under pretence that Miss Annie wanted to show them something there; and that having previously secured the windows, she had locked them in, and then ran away.

Egerton’s first thought, after hearing this terrifying statement, was concerning the safety of Annie. He told the trembling slave to fear nothing, but carefully to watch her young mistress, and if she attempted to leave her present shelter, to tell Mrs. Whitlaw the whole truth that she might restrain her, even by force, if necessary. He then obtained the key of the dairy-house, the situation of which he well knew, determined that his first object

should be the conveying the ladies confined in it to Mrs. Whitlaw's, and then to trust to being recognised as an Englishman, while he risked a visit to Colonel Beauchamp's house in the faint hope of saving its wretched master.

Light of foot, firm in nerve, and steadfast in purpose, he lost no moment after deciding what to do. He found the three ladies in a state of dreadful alarm; for no sooner did Mrs. Beauchamp discover that they were prisoners, than she guessed the truth, for by an infatuation difficult to comprehend, the lives of the planters seem pretty equally divided between tyrannising over their slaves, and trembling at the chance of their taking vengeance for it. Very few words passed between them, Egerton saying in that tone of decision which at such moments is all powerful—

"Mrs. Beauchamp, give me your arm; follow us closely, Miss Perkins, with your sister. I will take you to a place of safety where you will find Miss Beauchamp, and then I will seek the colonel."

Not a word was uttered in reply; nothing, I believe, silences talkers effectually but terror and sea-sickness. It was the wish and will of Egerton that they should walk quickly, but they had no other difficulty to contend with, for the negroes were too busy at their work of pillage to be at many yards' distance from the house. On reaching the friendly abode of the good Clio, they found that Nina, in her restless anxiety, had already told both her and Annie all she had previously told Egerton. The delight of Annie at seeing her mother in safety may be imagined, nor is it needful to dwell upon the amount of her gratitude to Egerton. But dreadful was the combat at her heart when she saw him about to plunge into danger so dreadfully certain, in the desperate hope of saving her unhappy father. Yet, could she bid him stay? It was impossible. Fortunately perhaps for her reason the interval of suspense was very short. On leaving the house he met one of Mrs. Whitlaw's domestic blacks. Her slaves, though much too well treated, too lazy, and too happy, to join in the insurrection, were still negroes, and as such most ardently interested in the success of their less happy fellow slaves. The man was returning from the scene of outrage, and seeing Egerton, whom he remembered as an English visitor, hurrying towards it, he civilly stopped him and begged him to return.

"Colonel Beauchamp——" said the panting Egerton.

"He has been dead this hour, sir," returned the negro, casting down his eyes, but very nearly smiling at the same moment; "and Judge Johnson," he added, in the same respectful tone, "has been done for longer still."

It is needless to dwell on the scenes which followed. Mrs. Whitlaw assured her agitated neighbours that they were now in no danger, but that as their former residence would offer a scene too

painful for them to look upon, their best course would be to accept the loan of her carriage and horses, and set off for New Orleans, or perhaps for New York, directly.

"For England! dearest Mrs. Beauchamp!" exclaimed Egerton. "Accept from me the duty, the affection, the protection of a son, and let me accompany you to England."

All that was likely to make this scheme appear desirable to the agitated widow was soon explained to her; the Misses Perkins seemed ready to take upon themselves the duties of the slaves she had lost, so they might be permitted to accompany her; and in short, for short it now must be, everything concerning what they left behind was consigned to the management of the friendly and prosperous Clio, and within twenty-four hours after Egerton's arrival he was on the road back to New Orleans, escorting his Annie, her mother, his two countrywomen, and the faithful Nina, to that city.

* * * * *

The tide had reached the point at which it is most favourable for vessels to work down the river from New Orleans to the Belize, and Egerton, with the party of females above enumerated, were waiting on the noble wharf for the arrangement of the ladder which was to assist them to get on board. Two fine vessels were at that moment preparing to depart for Europe, and the part of the wharf near which they both lay was crowded with spectators. In the midst of this crowd was a group, less quiet, and less sad-looking than their own, and which presently roused their attention by suddenly approaching them.

"My dearest Mrs. Beauchamp!" exclaimed my bold-hearted heroine, too secure of an immediate retreat to be afraid of anything.

"Goodness me! If there isn't the Perkinses!" cried Patty, clapping her hands.

"My dear ladies *our* ladder is ready," said the major, still enacting the character of the Rev. Mr. O'Donagough, and presenting his arm to his wife. Tornorino performed the same duty to his, and the whole party brushed by Mr. Egerton and his friends, none of whom gave a look or uttered a word of recognition, and mounted with every appearance of glee the "Lovely Anna," bound for home.

The party bound for England were also on board in a few minutes, and the two vessels followed each other closely down the river, the navigation of which, though slow, was perfectly prosperous, and Patty amused herself most delightfully during nearly the whole time it lasted by peeping at her old friends through a telescope, and proclaiming their quizzical looks to every one who would listen to her.

"The ingratitude of these Perkinses is perfectly disgusting!" said Mrs. Allen Barnaby with a shrug. "Heaven knows where they are all bundling to," she added, "but there is one thing you must promise me, my dearest Donny, and it is, that if we ever have the misfortune of falling in with any of that horridly vulgar set on the Continent, you will look at one and all of them as if you had never set eyes on them before."

THE END.

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